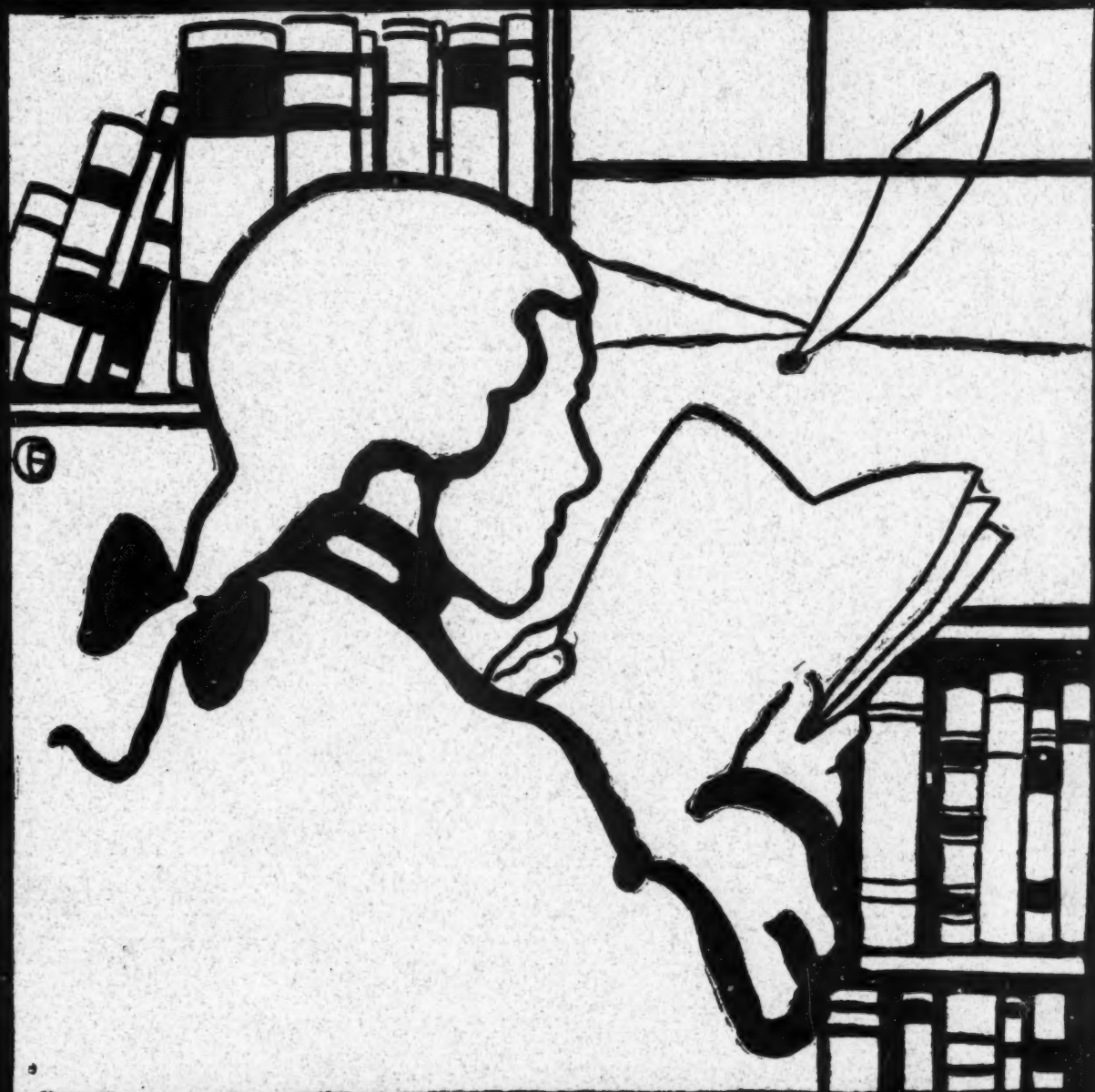


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The Literary Week.

THE June issue of the *Fortnightly Review* is memorable by reason of an article by M. Maeterlinck on "The Evolution of Mystery." Over twenty pages in length, this, the latest expression of M. Maeterlinck's philosophy, is divided into thirty-two short chapters. We have not space here to indicate the trend of M. Maeterlinck's thought, but we find room for a passage from the last chapter. The translation has been made by Mr. Alfred Sutro:

Our impulse is ever to depict life as more sorrowful than truly it is; and this is a serious error, to be excused only by the doubts that at present hang over us. No satisfying explanation has so far been found. The destiny of man is as subject to unknown forces to-day as it was in the days of old; and though it be true that some of these forces have vanished, others have arisen in their stead. The number of those that are really all-powerful has in no way diminished. Many attempts have been made, and in countless fashions, to explain the action of these forces and account for their intervention; and one might almost believe that the poets, aware that these explanations were all of them futile in face of a reality that for ever, and all things notwithstanding, reveals more and more of itself, have fallen back on fatality so as in some measure to sum up the inexplicable, or at least the sadness of the inexplicable. This is all that we find in Ibsen, the Russian novels, the highest class of modern fiction, Flaubert, &c. (see *War and Peace*, for instance, *L'Education Sentimentale*, and many others).

MR. RUDYARD KIPLING has written for the *Daily Express* a series of stories based upon his experiences during his recent visit to South Africa. These stories will present, under the guise of fiction, phases of both the administration and the actual conduct of the war which Mr. Kipling felt he could not embody in letters which he sent home.

MESSRS. CECIL and Hildebrand Harmsworth are about to start a weekly paper, which will be called the *New Liberal Review*. The price, it is stated, will be threepence.

MR. WILLIAM TINSLEY, who was for many years a prominent publisher, and who is about to publish a volume called *Random Recollections*, sends us the following letter: "May I say that the quotations you printed in your last issue from Mr. Sutherland Edwards's new book about my young brother Edward and the founding of the publishing business known as Tinsley Brothers are very incorrect? My brother and I were equal partners in that business, which had been established four years before we published *Lady Audley's Secret*, not *Aurora Floyd*, as Mr. Edwards intimates; and the price agreed for *Lady Audley* was £250—two-fifty pounds—not one thousand, as Mr. Edwards also intimates, and there was no need to, nor did we, borrow a shilling or any sum of money to pay Miss Braddon for any one of the four books we published for her. I must say I am sorry Mr. Edwards has thought it prudent to publish

foolish matter about my brother which could hardly be of interest to anyone and is certainly not good history."

WE take the following from the *Pall Mall Gazette*:

AFTER HEINE.

The stars look down from heaven above
When human hearts are breaking,
And mock the foolishness of love
That sets poor mortals aching.

This love, they say, this fatal bane,
To us it cometh never,
And thus do we alone maintain
Our deathless course for ever.

MR. GEORGE HAW, the author of the remarkable letters, "No Room to Live," in the *Daily News*, is the assistant editor of the *Municipal Journal*, a paper for which he has done varied and interesting work. He has now collected his *Daily News* letters into a volume, to which Sir Walter Besant has contributed an introduction.

THE issue by Messrs. Kegan Paul of *A Zulu Manual or Vade-Mecum*, by the Rev. Charles Roberts, reminds us that this is the third manual on the subject prepared by this writer. It may be assumed, therefore, that the Zulu language is being studied in this country—a veritable sign of the times. A Zulu sentence on the second page of this book reads like advice to Lord Roberts on his arrival in Pretoria: "Tyanelisisa indhlu izingosini zonke," which means: "Sweep thoroughly the house in all the corners."

A CORRESPONDENT writes: "Mr. Andrew Lang, in the last *ACADEMY*, demolishes Miss Forbes-Robertson's English and arguments with a gusto which precludes all notions of unmannerly heat. Should argument and answer rankle, however, as controversy is apt to do, may one of Miss Forbes-Robertson's sex recommend the reperusal of Chapter V. of *Northanger Abbey*? I will quote one sentence only: 'Let us leave it to the reviewers to abuse such effusions of fancy at their leisure, and over every new novel to talk in threadbare strains of the trash with which the "press now groans."' There is nothing new under the sun, even for Mr. Lang's searching."

Exit Party is the (we fear) rather premature title Sir Frederick Young is giving to an essay in political history. Theoretically, we are all opposed to the principle of "party"; and yet—! There can be no question that, however bad for the State the principle may be, it has been provocative of good matter from the literary point of view. We remember a couple of goodly tomes, entitled *English Parties and Party Leaders*, and they made very lively reading.

IN the June *Cornhill*, under the title "A Literary Nihilist," Mr. Thomas Secombe draws the literary character of M. Anatole France with fulness and skill. He finds M. France's literary counterpart in Lucien: "There is no imitation . . . but there is a remarkable affinity and a common attainment of that most difficult literary aim—the gift of making us think without being a bore." More interesting is this:

Among English writers it is difficult to name any whom he resembles with any degree of distinctness. Generically speaking, as a master of irony and a humorist of Cervantic descent, he has not a little in common with Fielding and with Disraeli; but in subtlety he suggests a much closer resemblance to Mr. Meredith, while in sentiment he is a good deal nearer than either to Dickens. As a practitioner of fiction he takes, perhaps, a greater licence than any of the masters named, for he is less a novelist than a thinker in novelistic form. As regards style it is still more difficult for us to match him; but by combining some of the features of Chesterfield, of Sterne, and of Matthew Arnold, we may get some idea of the pellucid clearness, the happy glint of fancy, and the felicity in phrase that go to make up a style absolutely free from any straining after effect. With all great artists it is the same, their talent seems to ignore labour.

MESSRS. CASSELL have just issued the first part of a new serial publication entitled *The Life and Times of Queen Victoria*, which will be completed in twenty-nine sixpenny parts. The bulk of the work consists of the narrative of the Queen's reign written some years ago by Mr. Robert Wilson, but this is preceded by the memoir of the personal life of the Queen on which Mrs. Oliphant was engaged at the time of her death. Both narratives have been brought up to date. The work is well and profusely illustrated.

WE are glad to see that the fine work of Mr. James Lane Allen in fiction is likely to be better known in this country than hitherto. Messrs. Macmillan have just issued Mr. Allen's book of short stories, entitled *Flute and Violin*, and other *Kentucky Tales and Romances*, and his longer stories, *A Kentucky Cardinal and Aftermath*. In a new introductory sketch to the *Kentucky Tales*, Mr. Allen has this suggestive note on the story called "The Two Gentlemen":

The author attempted to exhibit, in a way, a type of Kentucky gentleman farmer, who at the close of the Civil War abandoned the country for the towns, and led rather idle, useless lives. In England objection was made to this character on the ground that the trail of Colonel Newcome is over the colonels of American fiction. It is a point curiously misread, curiously misconceived. The truth is, about the same time that Thackeray found the lineaments and elements of his good and mighty Anglo-Saxon gentleman in that branch of the race, had he been living in certain parts of the United States he would have found essentially the same lineaments and elements diffused through this. Among the Kentucky gentlemen of the old school there were characters that forced you to think of Colonel Newcome. Not because they were imitations of Colonel Newcome, for they may never have heard of him, but because they themselves were made of the same stuff. And if to write of this local type, however inadequately, is to suggest some poor resemblance, as a pool might resemble an ocean, the point to be enforced is not the influence of Thackeray's work upon literature, but the influence of life upon Thackeray's work. So that he gathered together out of the depths of the race, and put together in the image of his own genius, a type of man that was the widely diffused creation of the race itself.

MR. J. C. TARVER, the author of a *Life of Gustave Flaubert*, writes pleasantly in the June *Macmillan* on "Cowper's Ouse." There is a great deal more of Cowper than of the river, but no one will complain of that. Mr. Turner thinks that an "adventurous holiday-maker . . . might find a less agreeable pastime than a voyage in a canoe from Newport Pagnell down to Turvey. Thus he

might bathe himself in the atmosphere which was breathed by no mean English poet, gliding beneath hills clothed with trees, or between wide meadows; but he would do well not to surrender himself unguardedly to the calm pleasures of plain-sailing, lest he should rue his error lost in the mazes of a reed-bed. Failing this adventure, his events will be the scream and flash of a kingfisher, or the sulky croak of a heron disturbed in his meal of fresh-water mussels." We thought, as we read, that Mr. Turner was going to forget Edward FitzGerald's love of Cowper's Ouse, but he mentions it just at the end. FitzGerald fished on the Ouse with his friend, W. Browne. When that friend married a wife and could come no more, FitzGerald wrote: "I have laid by my rod and line by the willows of Ouse for ever."

THE dedication of Mr. H. Rider Haggard's new volume, containing three stories, is as follows:

To the Memory of the Child

NADA BURNHAM,

who "bound all to her" and, while her father cut his way through the hordes of the Lugobo Regiment, perished of the hardships of war at Buluwayo on 19th May, 1896, I dedicate these tales—and more particularly the last, that of a Faith which triumphed over savagery and death.

THE author of "Musings without Method" is less atrabilious than usual this month. He jibes at Mr. Pinero's sensitiveness to criticism, and at the Academy Exhibition because it is a Babel of Art; but he smiles back on the Mafeking orgies, and has nothing but praise for old gentlemen who were detected in the act of blowing trumpets from the roofs of hansom cabs. Lastly, he writes with personal enthusiasm of the splendid qualities of the late Mr. R. A. M. Stevenson. Of the writer:

He painted and he wrote, but neither in his pictures nor in his books did he reveal the genius that was his. His eager brain was so busy with theories, that he could never abandon himself completely to the excitement of colour and form. As for writing, he deemed it always an ungrateful trade, which he had learned late, and pursued of necessity. Yet, had he realised it, words were always his true medium, thought was his true material. There was, half-untrained within him, a splendid gift of expression.

Of the man:

He was a true fantastic, for whom all things, even himself, were appearances rather than realities, and appearances which changed and shifted as he willed. He was, in fact, always dressing-up, as children say, and more than this, he was always dressing-up others. There was no one of his friends that had not for him a special character, which may or may not have resembled life, but which certainly influenced Stevenson's appreciation. One friend, for instance, personified for him the life of a rather squalid Bohemia. A, he would say, devotes his days to the comfort of the miserable and unfortunate. Another friend, with equal fantasy, he convicted of a too fine sensibility, asserting that in his pleasures he was something of a snob. As for himself, his character changed with his hat or his coat.

Of the talker:

It was to talk that he gave the best of his life, and those who knew him have suffered a supreme loss. Never did he spare himself or his fancy. He spoke of all things with incomparable courage and invention. Now he would dazzle you with the fireworks of paradox, now he would speak with the daring of Rabelais and a mercurial gaiety which was all his own. Or he would sketch odds in the manner of Wordsworth, or he would build up a romance about a phrase, an aspect, or a casual visitor.

Can no one—will no one—give us a more extended portrait of this delightful man?

IN an entertaining article on Spring by Sir Edwin Arnold, in the *Daily Telegraph*, he quotes his friend Mr. Bates, the famous traveller and naturalist, as saying to him: "Future generations will find out that climate is almost the only thing worth living for, and these chilly storm-fields of our North, where the race fights only to exist, will be contemptuously depopulated for the heavenly comfort and splendour of the Amazon and such vast sunlit valleys." Now contrast this with the following passage from *The Return of the Native*: "Indeed, it is a question if the exclusive reign of this orthodox beauty is not approaching its last quarter. The new Vale of Tempe may be a gaunt waste in Thule; human souls may find themselves in closer and closer harmony with external things, wearing a sombreness distasteful to our race when it was young. The time seems near, if it has not actually arrived, when the chastened sublimity of a moor, a sea, or a mountain will be all of nature that is absolutely in keeping with the moods of the more thinking among mankind. And ultimately, to the commonest tourist, spots like Iceland may become what the vineyards and myrtle-gardens of South Europe are to him now; and Heidelberg and Baden be passed unheeded as he hastens from the Alps to the sand-dunes of Scheveningen." A curious contrast!

A CORRESPONDENT writes: "Some months ago a little Spanish poem appeared in the ACADEMY with a challenge to any of your readers to translate it into English verse. The following attempt has been sent to me, which can hardly fail to be of interest, coming as it does from one of the loneliest regions of South America. 'Tis a far cry to Bolivia,' writes my correspondent, 'but I have beguiled a lonely hour in the attempt to render in English the sense and rhythm of the Spanish *petenera* you quote. Most likely the verses were sung by a forgotten improviser.'" The version forwarded by our correspondent is excellent:

A bonnie birdie that was my pleasure
Flew away from me,
A lovely maid was my heart's sole treasure,
Her loss I dree:
And so is all in this world of sorrow,
And so go all as the twain have gone;
Some lost by flying, and some by dying,
While men say sighing: God's will be done!

VISITORS to the Paris Exhibition cannot do better than provide themselves with *Exhibition Paris* (Heinemann). Its information is of the fullest, and contemplates all Paris as well as the Exhibition. To name one or two features out of many, there is a chapter on "How to See Paris in One Day for Forty-Five Francs." You begin your rounds in a cab at 5.30 a.m., and you emerge, at an unstated hour, from one of the theatres. The vocabularies include a useful list of slang words, as:

Bécoter, to kiss.	Rigolo, jolly.
Beurre, money.	Sapin, a cab.
Chipper, to steal.	Tube, a tall hat.
Douloureuse, the reckoning.	Urfe, lovely.
Gondoler, to shake with laughter.	Vadrouiller, to be out on the loose.
Pépin, an umbrella.	Youtre, a Jew.

The book is profusely illustrated, and, altogether, seems excellent.

IN an article on "The Star System in Publishing" the Chicago *Dial* warns American publishers against the dangers of the present "boom" in American novels. Enormous circulations, it is pointed out, may prove a delusion and a snare:

Publishers themselves know well enough that their success in the long run depends, not upon the fortunate acquisition of an occasional book that enjoys a sky-rocket career, but upon the possession of a substantial list of works of permanent value—works that occupy a standard

place in literature, and may be depended upon to provide a steady income for many years. The publisher who has a list of this sort is, of course, glad enough to get hold of an exceptionally successful novel from time to time; such a book represents to him so much clear gain, and he would not be human did he fail to keep an intelligent watch for productions of this sort. But if he allows his head to be turned by visions of this kind of luck; if he despises the more modest, but safer, ventures; if he bends his energies toward achieving an abnormal sale for a few books, instead of a normal sale for many, he is likely to come to grief. His real interests lie in the possession of many claims to public esteem, rather than in the making of a few successful appeals to popular caprice.

That is good sense.

A CORRESPONDENT reminds us that when Tennyson's first version of the "Dream of Fair Women" was published, the lines

One drew a sharp knife thro' my tender throat
Slowly,—and nothing more,

were met by one critic with the question—"What more did she want?" Our correspondent regrets that this blunt, effective sort of criticism is out of vogue, and he would like to see a revival. His desire is shared by others. A correspondent of the Chicago *Dial* writes to that paper under the heading, "Honey or Vinegar in Book Reviews":

An old-fashioned acquaintance of mine complains that reading a modern Review l-aves him with an unpleasant sensation as of having dined wholly off honey. The book-reviewer of to-day is altogether too lenient, too considerate, too apologetic, too blandly deferential a creature to suit this reader's robust taste. He laments the decay of that fine old spirit of ferocity which animated criticism in the palmy days when Jeffrey and his merry men used to fling themselves on an aspiring "Laker" or "Cockney" with the joy of an Iroquois scalping his victim, and the fluency in insult of the late Mr. Brann. The most readable thing in the world, he thinks, is a merciless "roast" of a new book—something in the way of Macaulay's flagellations of Croker and Robert Montgomery. Holding these opinions, this charitable soul was naturally much gratified the other day when a well-known critic proclaimed in print the present crying need of a Review conducted on the old savage Edinburgh lines. The article in which this opinion is aired smells, it is fair to say, suspiciously of paradox. But, at all events, what the writer of it appears to think is wanted in these degenerate days of critical urbanity and super-abundant human kindness is a Review whose amiable specialty it shall be to damn and disparage, to thwart the "booms" of publishers, to clip the wings of aspiring young authors, to knock new-born reputations promptly on the head, and, in fine, to play in the world of current letters a part not unlike that played in politics by Marat's *L'Ami du Peuple*. . . . It can hardly be denied, I think, that the criticism of the modern reviewer is mostly of a sort that does more credit to his heart than his head. His eagerness to praise constantly impels him to over-praise—to lavish upon mediocrity terms that should be reserved for genius. I have often thought that the sanguine American lady who was gently taken to task by Matthew Arnold for asserting that excellence is "common and abundant" must have been a great reader of Reviews. The habit would easily account for her cheerful delusion.

Perhaps, after all, a slight infusion into the honeyed sweetness of the new Review of the spice and vinegar of the old might not be unsalutary.

Other times other manners. Still, we think that the happy medium was struck by Hepworth Dixon when he edited the *Athenæum*. His counsel to his reviewers was this: "Be just, be generous, but when you do meet with a deadly ass sling him up."

We confess (possibly to our shame) that we do not know who the "Brothers of the Book" may be. But the Brothers of the Book send us an announcement which we read with awe and appetite. There is a kind of pro-

cessional, soft-footed, wand-shaking unction in the terms in which art booklets are announced in America. Take the following advertisement:

The Brothers of the Book announce as their next publication a monograph, entitled *Some Children's Book-plates: an Essay in Little*, by Wilbur Macey Stone.

The book will be printed on Van Gelder hand-made paper, bound in French charcoal paper boards with designed paper labels, and illustrated with eight reproductions of children's book-plates (one in three colours) on Japanese vellum. The plate forming the frontispiece will be autographed by the designer, Jay Chambers.

The edition (which will be numbered) is offered to subscribers only, and will be limited to the number of subscriptions received before June twentieth, at which time the book will be put to press.

FEW pages in Ruskin's writings are more familiar to young people than that one in the appendix to *The Elements of Drawing* in which he gave his advice about the choice of books. The advice was eccentric, and with it came certain judgments which only Mr. Ruskin could have enunciated. In her monograph on Ruskin, reviewed by us elsewhere, Mrs. Meynell criticises the passage:

The young artist is directed to read the poets—Scott, Wordsworth, Keats, Crabbe, Tennyson, the two Brownings, Lowell, Longfellow, and Coventry Patmore alone among the moderns. "Cast Coleridge at once aside as sickly and useless, and Shelley as shallow and verbose." Byron is but withheld for a time, with praise of his "magnificence." And we have Patmore—the poet of spiritual passion and lofty distinction—praised for "quiet modern domestic feeling" and a "finished piece of writing." And Shelley "verbose"—"Adonais" verbose, and not "Endymion"! All the living poets whom Ruskin praised—Browning, Rossetti, and Patmore among them—had to endure to be praised side by side with Longfellow, and they did not love the association. But in all this strange sentence nothing is less intelligible than the word which commends to the young student—urged in the same breath to restrict himself to what is generous and reverend and peaceful—all the writings of Robert Browning. The student is warned to refrain from even noble, even pure satire, from coldness, and from a sneer; and is yet sent to a poet who gave his imagination to the invention of infernal hate in the "Spanish Cloister," and of the explanations of Mr. Sludge and Bishop Blougram, busily and indefatigably squalid and ignoble, and delighting in derision.

How quietly a huge book may pass from the press to its own public! We have before us

THE CLAN DONALD

BY THE

REV. A. MACDONALD

Minister of Killarnan

AND THE

REV. A. MACDONALD

Minister of Killarney

It contains 826 pages, and is the second volume of the work.

Bibliographical.

A GOOD deal of attention has been drawn by advertisement to the production of a novel by Mr. Ronald MacDonald—"a son of George MacDonald," as the announcements tell us. This is not, I think, Mr. MacDonald's first performance as a "writing man"; I fancy he has, before this, dabbled in dramatic work. In 1896 appeared two plays, "All the Difference" and "The Eleventh Hour," of the first of which Mr. "Ronald MacDonald" was the

sole author, while of the second he was part-author. Was he not, also, part-author, with a brother, of a play produced some years ago at the Royalty Theatre? My memory may, of course, be deceiving me. The children of George MacDonald have been rather encouraged to take an interest in things dramatic, for their father, it will be recollected, made a sort of drama out of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and conducted representations of the work in different parts of the country. Among the juvenile actors, no doubt, was Mr. Ronald MacDonald.

Talking of plays and players, it has flashed across me that, in the recent quota of Royal birthday honours, there figured the name of a worthy Conservative, one of the leaders of the party in Derby, in whose person the Crown has, no doubt unwittingly, conferred distinction on literature. Mr. (now Sir) C. C. Bowring, is, I believe, the author of a play called "Pedigree," produced one afternoon some years ago at Toole's Theatre. It might never have been written but for the existence of "Caste"; but it was by no means ineffective, and showed a not unjustifiable ambition.

Yet another brief note on the literary side of the theatre. A writer in *Literature*, I see, includes, among the living English novelists who have written plays, Miss Marie Corelli, Mr. Hardy, and Sir Walter Besant. There have been adaptations, of course, of "The Sorrows of Satan"; but what drama has Miss Corelli herself written? The dramatised "Far from the Madding Crowd" was described officially as "by Thomas Hardy and J. Comyns Carr"; but was not the dramatisation actually done by Mr. Carr alone—though, to be sure, with Mr. Hardy's concurrence? Sir Walter Besant, also, has come before the play-going world only as collaborator with Mr. W. H. Pollock. I am not aware of his having accomplished, unassisted, the production of a drama.

Mr. Hector Macpherson "greatly dares" indeed. He is going to write a monograph on David Hume, and I dare say it will be very readable and useful. Can we, however, rank it among "felt wants"? One remembers a certain monograph on Hume in the "English Men of Letters" series (Macmillan, 1879), and another such monograph in the series of "Philosophical Classics" (Blackwood, 1886). The former was written by Prof. Huxley, and the latter by Prof. William Knight—very good authorities both, as Mr. Hector Macpherson, I am sure, would be the first to admit.

I read that a lady novelist, finding that the title she had first chosen for a tale had been used already, has substituted for it that of *The Touch of a Vanished Hand*. Alack and alas! in this case also she is not without a predecessor. A story called *The Touch of a Vanished Hand* was published in 1889, and, moreover, it is in Mudie's Catalogue at the present moment. Mudie's Catalogue, I think, is a book which novel writers would find it worth their while to acquire, or at any rate to consult, before they christen any more stories.

The poets, as well as the novelists, would welcome an official list of titles (published, shall we say, at the public's expense?). Here, for instance, is Mr. Horatio Brown with his book of verse called *Drift*. Now, this is such an obvious name for a volume of miscellaneous lyrics that it seems a moral certainty that it has been used before. Nevertheless, to go no further back than two decades, I know of nothing (in the same line of literature) nearer to it than the *Drift Wood* of Miss H. M. Burnside, whose muse, I need not say, is of the humblest sort. The idea of "drift," in general, is, of course, familiar enough to the literary mind. During the last ten years we have had volumes entitled *The Drift of Fate* (a novel), *Drifted Home*, *Drifted Northward*, *Drifting (tout court)*, *Drifting Apart* (by Mrs. Macquoid), *Drifting Through Dreamland*, *Drifting Towards the Breakers*, *Drifting Under the Southern Cross*, *Driftwood Sketches*, *Drift from Longshore*, and so forth.

THE BOOKWORM.

Reviews.

A Mind and a Mind.

MODERN ENGLISH WRITERS. — *John Ruskin*. By Mrs. Meynell. (Blackwood. 2s. 6d.)

In her first chapter Mrs. Meynell speaks of this book as a "handbook of Ruskin," and, similarly, in her last chapter, as an attempt toward a "little popular guide." These descriptions may stand if we are allowed to suggest that the handbook is for those who are returning from Ruskin, rather than for those who are going to him; that the guidance is more suited to readers who are perplexedly filled with the Master, than to those who are about to fill themselves in a girlish hope of "lilies." Again, some readers may feel generously indignant with Mrs. Meynell for putting the name of handbook to a work of exhaustive thought and beautiful literary fibre. We feel no such concern. In an age when trash comes with trumpet, a piece of literature may as well swim into our ken as Number Three in a series of handbooks.

In its preparation and building this monograph is a work of unusual solicitude—solicitude of the heart as well as of the head: for when we have reckoned up the books that have been mastered; and the long dissectings, relating, and comparings which alone could unify that reading; and the writer's pains to spare us the processes which she would not spare herself—there remain a crowd of instances where, not the faculties, but the loyalties, of her mind have had to bear their strain; where the burden of dealing justly by a dead man's work has been heavy; and where reverence, though it never failed, has had to make itself felt in the tone of "I do not agree," or in the tone of "I do not understand." It may be said that these are simply the pains of critical biography. Yes, but the quantity of such pains depends on the quantity of the biographer's mind; and the resolve to walk with a Master, yet not be dragged by him, to record his conclusions, but always to understand them, to set free his messages, but to give them the accent and effectiveness of the hour, becomes notable when it is made by a mind competent for the task in hand, and sensible of all the risks. Such a book, we think, is Mrs. Meynell's. It expounds a known mind by its effect on a known mind, and we watch the impact. It is impossible to read her acute exposition and not be thinking almost as much about the author of *The Rhythm of Life* as about the author of *Modern Painters*. This is not to diminish the expository value of the book, but to describe it.

In approaching her task Mrs. Meynell might, it is obvious, have quickly pronounced for the notion that Ruskin was a true seer of nature but a muddle-headed instructor in Art, and so have been free to interpret and emulate his fine words about Sun, Cloud, Shadow, Reed, Blade of Grass, and the Winds of the World. For on these things she also has thought intently, and on all could say unusual things again. But it has not been her way thus to use Ruskin's best. She has undertaken nothing less than a study of the whole body of his work, and its painful exposition. Painful is the word; we have rarely seen a mind in such lengthy travail, imposing such exactness on every decision. The essay on "Rejection" had prophetic sentences: "We are constrained to such vigilance as will not let even a master's work pass unfanned and unpurged. . . . Our reflection must be alert and expert. . . . It makes us shrewder than we wish to be." It is this helplessness to be the bland disciple that makes this book so vital. The warmest praise of the Master is there, and yet courteous alarm-bells are rung on every page.

This doctrine of rejection compels Mrs. Meynell to be a vigilant critic of Ruskin's style. Yet there is an eager, almost laughing, recognition of the fine things. Thus, from

some pages "beautiful beyond praise" in *Unto this Last*, Mrs. Meynell gives:

All England may, if it chooses, become one manufacturing town; and Englishmen, sacrificing themselves to the good of humanity, may live diminished lives in the midst of noise, of darkness, and of deadly exhalation. But the world cannot become a factory or a mine. . . . Neither the avarice nor the rage of men will ever feed them. . . . So long as men live by bread, the far away valleys must laugh as they are covered with the gold of God, and the shouts of the happy multitudes ring round the winepress and the well.

In the chapter on the fifth volume of *Modern Painters* we have: "How exquisitely is this written of the Venetian citizen, with its allusions to certain Greeks—to Anacreon, to Aristophanes, and to Hippias Major":

No swallow chattered at his window, nor, nestled under his golden roofs, claimed the sacredness of his mercy; no Pythagorean fowl brought him the blessings of the poor, nor did the grave spirit of poverty rise at his side to set forth the delicate grace and honour of lowly life. No humble thoughts of grasshopper sire had he, like the Athenian; no gratitude for gifts of olive; no childish care for figs, any more than thistles.

From *Præterita* "this magnificent image of the great balance of Johnson's style":

I valued his sentences not primarily because they were symmetrical, but because they were just, and clear . . . it is a method of judgment rarely used by the average public, who . . . are as ready with their applause for a sentence of Macaulay's, which may have no more sense in it than a blot pinched between double paper, as to reject one of Johnson's, . . . though its symmetry be as of thunder answering from two horizons.

Of censure there is some, too, and it is in this direction that we encounter, with distinct regret, what we may call Mrs. Meynell's *ukase* method of criticism. Page after page passes, and the criticism is gracious, experimental, or proven; then comes a *ukase*, an emanation of opinion, decisive in inverse proportion to its needlessness. These *ukas* are in your hands before you recover speech. You would exclaim, you would summon assistance, but Mrs. Meynell passes on in the gentle, deaf autocracy of her mood. The ceremony of delivering a *ukase* cannot be better illustrated than by her remarks on one of the most famous passages in the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*. She says:

Ruskin's description of that landscape . . . is a finished work, exquisite with study of leaf and language, but yet not effective in proportion to its own beauty and truth. Ruskin wrote it in youth, in the impulse of his own discovery of language, and of all that English in its rich modern freshness could do under his mastery—and it is too much, too charged, too anxious. Some sixty lines of "word-painting" are here, and they are less than this line of a poet—

"Sunny eve in some forgotten place."

This refraining phrase is of more avail to the imagination than the splendid subalpine landscape of *The Seven Lamps*.

That is a *ukase*. How civilly you would have accepted the whole judgment up to the words "too anxious"! But this line of poetry—torn from some antipodean context, flicked into the witness box unnamed, unsworn, unremembered, and crucially irrelevant to the case—this pet lamb in court, or this rabbit from counsel's hat, how shall we accept it? how be happy if we do not accept it?

And yet this is a mild example. On another page, after quoting a few sentences of Ruskin's, Mrs. Meynell writes, in parenthesis:

(Ruskin, at this time and ever after, used "which" where "that" would be both more correct and less inelegant. He probably had the habit from him who did more than any other to disorganise the English language—that is, Gibbon.)

That is the perfect *ukase*. Note the intensification of authority by the withholding of Gibbon's name until the air has been darkened with his sin. But is it fair, or quite in the scheme of things, thus to ban Gibbon in a casual breath; to flout, *en passant*, the reader's probable cherished opinion of Gibbon, as if it were nothing? We picture Gibbon's own astonishment, when this judgment is whispered along "the line of the Elysian shades." He may have expected it, may have humbled himself for its coming; but the manner of its coming he could not have foreseen. "In parenthesis!" we hear him gasp, as he sinks back on his couch of asphodel.

Well, but it is not enough that an interpreter should have prayed three times a day "in his chamber toward Jerusalem," or that he should pronounce the handwriting on the wall elegant or not—the question is, Can he translate its meaning? In this case the question may be hard to answer. Our own difficult, incompact impression of Mrs. Meynell's interpretation of Ruskin—itself necessarily difficult and incompact—flies to a phrase, or rather to two words, which Mrs. Meynell brings into vital relation with Ruskin—Mystery and Lesson. She shows that, when dealing with the Mystery, Ruskin is great; but, "if ever he has explained in vain, registered an inconsequence, committed himself to failure, it has been in the generous cause of possible rescue—it has been in the Lesson." The nobility of her exposition of Ruskin dwells centrally in the fact that, while she is sometimes doubtful about the Lesson, or is obliged to show (by its arduous compilation) that it was not too clearly or consistently delivered, or is constrained to deny it as a working precept, she makes us feel how glorious were those dealings with the hidden Mystery which issued in the peccant Teaching. And the vision of Ruskin which she leaves in the mind, in the mind of the present writer, is that of a man who spent his life in turning over with his great clean hand—first in hope, and at last in weariness—the whole assembled result of human art, and the registers of its origins. Anon he rose, like one drunken with beauty, afflicted with more purpose than he could contain or control, to teach from a full, but too particular, inspiration. And because in its divine frenzy the Lesson was not aimed, shaped, timed, proved, peptonised—it was laughed into the street by men whose hands stayed in their coat-tails. It would be easy for us to show again and again how Mrs. Meynell, having wrestled with and reluctantly confuted Ruskin's Lesson, has convinced us of his hold on the Mystery. And one comes to be very grateful for these long compensating swings of the pendulum, and for the smaller reparations. One notes how, after some pages of particularly destructive criticism on *The Two Paths*, a dainty justice hastens to offer this:

If I have treated this book with controversy, it was impossible to do otherwise. But out of its treasures of wisdom take the page in praise of Titian, which ends with the passage: "Nobody cares much at heart about Titian; only there is a strange undercurrent of everlasting murmur about his name, which means the deep consent of all great men that he is greater than they."

And surely with this quotation went a tact in its choice, for Ruskin's fate and Titian's are not unlike. Ruskin's bitter disappointment when he found that the Turner water-colours in the National Gallery, which he had arranged with incredible labour, had been absolutely forgotten by the public and allowed to fade by Providence, produces a fine comment. Ruskin had said: "That was the first mystery of life to me," and Mrs. Meynell says:

The reader will remember that Turner's pictures were not only neglected by men, but also irreparably injured and altered by time; to witness this was to endure the chastisement of a hope whereof few men are capable. Surely it is no obscure sign of greatness in a soul—that it should have hoped so much. Ninety-and-nine are they who need no repentance, having not committed the sin of

going thus in front of the judgments of heaven—heralds—and have not been called back to rebuke as was this one. In what has so often been called the dogmatism of Ruskin's work appears this all noble fault.

Upon the discovery of this mystery crowd all the mysteries. Who that has suffered one but has also soon suffered all? In this great lecture ["The Mystery of Life and its Arts"] Ruskin confesses them one by one, in extremities of soul. And he is aghast at the indifference not of the vulgar only, but of poets. The seers themselves have paltered with the faculty of sight. Milton's history of the fall of the angels is unbelievable to himself, told with artifice and invention, not a living truth presented to living faith, nor told as he must answer it in the last judgment of the intellectual conscience. "Dante's", The indifference of the world as to the infinite question of religion, the indifference of all mankind as to the purpose of its little life, of every man as to the effect of his little life—in an evil hour these puzzles throng the way to the recesses of thought.

We have shown the temper and tendency of Mrs. Meynell's book. If we are now asked whether she has evolved from Ruskin's teaching a clear resultant that one may copy into one's pocket-book, and say, "At last, this is Ruskin's teaching," we answer that she has failed to do this—because it was not possible. All the more is one impressed by the patience which footed every inch of the way to a foreseen vagueness. But Mrs. Meynell has set many things in order, and has put some things in a bright light; she has greatly distinguished Ruskin's failure from his success; and she has written an intrinsically fine book, of which the labour and truthful speaking adumbrate the labour and truthful speaking of the Master.

"And yet—he is a Master."

The Dead City. By Gabriele d'Annunzio. Translated by Arthur Symons. (Heinemann.)

D'ANNUNZIO is a master of unquestionable genius in a very questionable school. It is the school which makes parade of the fact that it is the offspring of decay, which seeks its charm in decay, and has veritably "made a covenant with death." Exceedingly perfect in technique, vividly imaginative, his masterly novels are impregnated with corruption in a much deeper sense than that of mere sensuality—though this at times is present. To him and the writers of his school we are often tempted to cry with Macbeth: "Out on ye, owls! nothing but songs of death?" And yet—he is a master!

This latest play of d'Annunzio's is most typical of its author and of a moribund age and art. As a play it is over-soft, over-luxuriant. The copious stage directions of Maeterlinck are carried to an excess in which one sees the novelist. They become veritable descriptive passages. Withal, it is most powerful in its kind, its strictly limited kind, though that is not the power of strength nor yet of spiritual insight. Infinitely delicate razor-edge of sensation pervades the play: its people see with their finger-tips, feel at every pore; but it is yet a purely material sensativeness, it is subtilised, one might almost say volatilised, materiality. Symbolic it is throughout; but the symbolism is of the tomb. Incidents are artfully introduced, Maeterlinck-wise, and emphasised, for their figurative and bodiful significance. The scene is laid in Argos, looking out on the ashes of Mycenæ—a sultry and thirsting soil, an expired and dismembered city. The atmosphere is laden with death, the characters are marked with death like decaying or over-ripe plants; and, unlike Shakespeare, there is no character to suggest, however tacitly, the sanity from which the others deflect. A luxuriant and most sensitive beauty overspreads this dramatic cemetery, peopled by the mad. The whole play palpitates with a deadly beauty, a mortal and ruinous loveliness, which shines as putrescence shines. Our phrase

is not overstrained; delirium seems not far from all d'Annunzio's characters; we feel as if we were in an asylum for diseased minds, where the ideas of everyone are monstrous and distorted, like shadows cast by firelight. The blind girl, Anna, at the very outset recounts a dream of sudden age—a dream undreamed by the sane, just possible in its hideousness to dawning madness: "I felt furrowing wrinkles breaking out all over my body; I felt the hairs falling from my head in great locks on my lap, and my fingers tangled in them as in unwound skeins; my gums were emptied, and my lips stuck to them." She complains of the hurry of life in its morbid perception by her senses: "In the silence and darkness, sometimes, *I hear life hurrying with such a terrible noise*, Bianca Maria, that I would gladly die, only not to hear it any longer."

Much of the vividly imaginative speech in this drama, like the words we have italicised, oversteps the verge of sanity. The very skylarks are *fin-de-siècle*. "One," says Alessandro, "fell, all of a sudden, at the feet of my horse, heavy as a stone, and lay there, dead, struck by its own frenzy, by having sung with too much joy." It is only a decadent skylark that would do that.

This blind Anna is one of the principal personages. Beautiful, though blind, she is of a preternatural perceptiveness, not inconceivable in one so afflicted, and described with touches of exquisite passion and poetry. Her husband is Alessandro, a poet, and they are dwelling with his bosom friend Leonardo, who is wrapped in the search among the ruins of Mycenæ for the buried remains of the Atridæ and Cassandra—victims of the terrible tragedy renowned in Greek drama. With him is his lovely sister, Bianca Maria, glowing with the flame of youthful life, and magnetic to those about her. Leonardo's discovery of the buried Atridæ (magnificently described) takes place at the close of the first act, nor has his pursuit any obvious connexion with the plot; but it is continuously suggested that from the soil impregnated with ancient crime the buried spirit of dark Greek passions rises as an infection upon the living searchers, fevering them with the obsession of like sin. The working out of these morbid passions among the four constitutes the theme of the tragedy. Bianca Maria and Alessandro are violently drawn to each other; and the poet's blind wife, Anna, from the beginning divines their love. Leonardo is infected with a more sinister disease, obscure to the others, until he himself, half-way through the play, reveals it to the horrified Alessandro. For this latter reason we cannot here deal fully with the play. We can but indicate it as the theme of John Ford's well-known play, and (from a very different standpoint) the basis of *The Revolt of Islam*, as Shelley originally wrote it. Lovers of contrast may compare Ford with d'Annunzio. The former is far the more healthy (so far as is possible with so morbid a theme) and dramatic; the latter more finished and levelly poetic—more an artist in all but dramatic power. When Leonardo realises that Bianca Maria is the source both of his own and Alessandro's obsession, and that Anna is preparing to drown herself in order to free her husband for the woman she loves as a sister, he comes to the delirious resolve to liberate them all by the death of Bianca Maria. The play closes as Anna stumbles upon the drowned body of Bianca Maria, tended by the poet that loved her and the brother that has murdered her.

This sombre plot, lavishly and resolvedly designed to play upon all the nerves of horror, is worked out with marvellous intimacy of execution. Dramatic character neither exists nor is attempted, save in the most generic way. Anna is other-worldly, outside life; Bianca Maria is intended for the embodiment of plenitudinous youth. Yet she is no less a creature of naked nerve than her avowedly neurotic friend. But if you can reconcile yourself to this universal super-exaltation of sensibility, there is tragic keenness and the bare edge of suffering beauty

in the play. The Italian genius is visible, acute rather than wide, as a great writer has described it. "Pain is the exceedingly keen edge of bliss" in the most voluptuous passages. Written, for the most part, in a strain of eloquence shot with gleaming threads of poetry, it rises frequently into poetry absolute and unmingled. D'Annunzio is *féy* of flowers. Their scent, their colour, their profusion fill his imagination and overflow continually into his imagery. They lend an exquisite metaphor to the lovely passage in which the blind Anna fingers the loosened tresses of Bianca Maria: "What hair! what hair! It is as soft to the fingers as tepid water flowing! . . . It is a torrent. It covers you all over. It covers me too. What floods! what floods! It has a perfume; it has a thousand perfumes. A torrent full of flowers!" Note that adjective "tepid," in its connexion with the living warmth of hair. The blind girl's exaltation of perception is most subtly described: "It is as if your fingers saw. . . . Each of your fingers is like an eyelid that presses upon one. Ah! it is as if your soul came down into the tips of your fingers, and the flesh lost its human nature." With the same beauty Bianca Maria is delineated: "The desire of life radiates from your body like the heat of a lighted hearth."

The first scene of the second act, in which Alessandro declares his love to Bianca Maria, is a marvellous piece of eloquent passion, with flashes of lyricism intensified by daring imagery. Too long, perhaps, for stage effect, and almost certainly too subtle for a popular audience, the speeches carry one away in the reading by their impassioned enchantment. Here are a few snatches:

ALESSANDRO.

I have met you in dreams as now I meet you in life. You belong to me as if you were my creation, formed by my hands, inspired by my breath. Your face is beautiful in me as a thought in me is beautiful. When your eyelids quiver it seems to me that they quiver like my blood, and that the shadow of your eyelashes touches the root of my heart.

BIANCA MARIA.

Be silent! Be silent! I cannot breathe. Ah, I cannot live any longer, I cannot live any longer!

ALESSANDRO.

You cannot live if you do not live in me, for me, now that you are in my life as your voice is in your mouth. . . .

BIANCA MARIA.

You exalt with your breath the humblest of creatures. I have been only a good sister. . . .

ALESSANDRO.

But was there not also another creature living beside the good sister? . . . Wherever there was a trace of the great myths or a fragment of the imaginings of beauty with which the chosen race transfigures the force of the world, she passed with her reviving grace, passing lightly over the distance of centuries as if she followed the song of the nightingale across a country strewn with ruins.

This is splendid writing. With Leonardo's communication to Alessandro of his dreadful secret, in the ensuing scene, begin the most darkly oppressive portions of the play, prelude to the final tragedy. It is not possible, nor perhaps desirable, to suggest by extracts the power of these repellent, yet subtle, scenes. But even this part is relieved—or perhaps intensified—by passages of contrasting beauty. Such is the wonderfully lovely imagery with which Anna describes the statues in fountains:

They enjoy, at the same time, rest and fluidity. In lonely gardens they sometimes seem in exile, but they are not; for their liquid soul never ceases to communicate with the far-off mountains, whence they come while yet asleep, and shut up in the mass of lifeless mineral. They listen astonished to the words that come into their mouth from the depths of the earth, but they are not deaf to the

colloquies of poets and sages who love to repose there, as in a retreat, in the musical shade where marble perpetuates a calm gesture.

Of the final scene, powerful and intensely morbid, we can give no conception. The play, as a closet-drama, is, perhaps, near perfection in its decadent kind. Nor need we attempt more formal criticism. In this case, to describe is to criticise, to criticise is to describe. But we should add, in conclusion, that Mr. Arthur Symonds's translation is admirable—nay, beautiful.

Birds of the North.

Among the Birds in Northern Shires. By Charles Dixon. Illustrated by Charles Whympers. (Blackie & Co.)

MR. DIXON has produced a large, pleasant, gossiping book of ornithology, that might prove difficult to read straight through, but seems meant for dipping into. You can scarcely open it without fishing up something interesting and agreeable. But the exact student, the hunter of mere facts, should be warned away. "Northern Shires" is in itself a vague expression, and means to Mr. Dixon all the counties between Yorkshire and Shetland. He has rambled in most of them, but pretends to make no exhaustive study of local ornithology. To show what we mean let us instance the raven. He tells us generally that this bird is disappearing everywhere except in the Highlands, and in a word picture as charming as Mr. Whympers's excellent drawing tells us of his meeting with it in Skye, St. Kilda, and on the misty heaths between Sligachan and Talisker, but is somewhat indefinite in his references to its occurrence in the North of England. This to us proved somewhat disappointing. Last year Mr. Christopher Leyland, whose zoological collection at Haggerstone might have rewarded a visit from Mr. Dixon, informed the present writer that a pair of ravens have annually reared and brought off a brood of young near Kidlands, his Cheviot shooting-place. We searched through Mr. Dixon's references in order to find out, if possible, other proofs that the raven, common enough in old days in the wild country round Harrow Bog and the Henhole, is recovering ground, but all he says is that it frequents Dartmoor, but is only a casual visitant to other English moors. From the same authority we learned with regret that the merlin, smallest and prettiest of our falcons, and so characteristic of the Cheviots, is disappearing. Mr. Dixon's information confirms this account, but lays the blame on the gamekeeper, whom he also denounces for exterminating kites, buzzards, and hobbies. Not quite fairly we think. The growth of one species and the disappearance of another baffles every attempt to find a satisfactory reason. If we may trust to the references in Shakespeare, old Acts of Parliament, parish records, and other documents, literary and antiquarian, choughs and crows used to follow the spring plough in equal numbers. We use crows in the way of the careless playwright, who signifies thereby all the black tribe that ranges from jackdaw to raven. The chough has become *avis rarissima*, and the rook and daw have multiplied exceedingly. Why? No gamekeeper interferes here. In a water close by where these lines are penned the moorhen and coot were once equally abundant. They have been neither shot at nor disturbed, yet while one has flourished the other has dwindled away, and there is not a nest where a score used to be. Why? At one time the kite was the commonest of London birds, sitting on the houses and haunting the markets. It has become a stranger not only in Fleet-street but in the Northern Shires, and no adequate reason can be found. The magpie was as familiar to hamlet and cottage a few generations back as the starling and sparrow are to-day. It is seldom seen now and the jay has become

abundant. To account for the magpie's increasing scarcity is as difficult as it is to say why a species of butterfly appears in myriads and then dwindles till it is a cherished prize of the "boy-collector."

But this is taking us away from our Northern Shires. Frequently in skimming the attractive pages of Mr. Dixon we have caught ourselves wondering where and how a contrast could be established between the birds of the Northern and those of the Southern Shires. The fauna is very nearly the same. On May nights it is true you shall not in the bleaker North list the nightingale's "most musical, most melancholy lay"—that is to say, you may do so on rare occasions only. Mr. Dixon, who seems to accept the current belief that Philomel does not breed north of the Trent, may like to know that he has indubitably appeared, to take one place, in the Vale of Whittingham. Veracious newspapers told the strange tale, and a naturalist of renown went, saw, heard, and ultimately attested to the fact—these things being duly chronicled in another Mr. Dixon's charming books, *Whittingham Vale*. Yet the "voluptuous nightingale" is not characteristic of the Northern night. But there are far more owls. To hear them hooting in Chillingham Park, or about Ford Castle, or in the dark Flooden woods is to wonder where they find holes enough to live in during daytime. And if you follow the ploughman on a spring day the crowd behind will not be quite the same in the North as in the South. Black is the prevailing, almost the uniform hue behind the Wilts or Glo'ster plough-boy; all the way from Lincolnshire to the Highlands, gulls—the blackheaded one *Larus ridibundus*—turns the black into piebald. Indeed, this inland breeding gull lends a character to the North, nesting sometimes in the pond of a beautiful park, sometimes in bog or mountain tarn, always carrying with it something of the freshness, the colour, and even the sound of the sea. Yet its tastes are fickle and wayward. A gull pond—we like not the expression gullery—is a beautiful ornament to a manor, but is difficult to establish, and the creatures forsake it at slight provocation. We do not think they have ever been enticed back to Paston Lake—dear to boyish memory for many a long summer day's perch-fishing—and very few go to Pallinsburn now. Superstition says they were attached to the family of Askew and that they have not been so friendly since the present head of it assumed the name of Robertson, and in accordance with the will of his father-in-law made Ladykirk his chief residence.

The streams of the North, tumbling as they do from the hills and abounding in shallows, runs, and cascades, suit that merry bird, the dipper, better than the smooth Tennysonian brooks of the South, and he is, accordingly, a familiar of the angler. But the kingfisher—that "refulgent avine gem," as Mr. Dixon calls him with some "profusion of epitaphs"—shows himself rarely on the Tweed. You are more likely to meet with him in St. James's Park than the Braes of Yarrow. The heron, however, stands on one leg and admires his reflection in the pool, not by any means so wild and shy as he is in the home counties, where he carries about with him memories of the punting sea-coast gunner. Mingled with the brawl of the water is the sand-piper's eternal scream, especially in May and June, when the anxieties of nesting-time are at their worst. To the fisherman, too, comes the wail of the curlew, here a bird of the mountain more than of the sea-coast; and all the summer day the white gulls flash to the sunlight as they wing up and down the water-courses seeking for fish.

It is doubtful how far Mr. Dixon is justified in lamenting the extinction of birds of prey, since very great changes have occurred in the last two decades. As far as bird life is affected, the chief of these are the desertion of the country by the peasant and the greater strictness with which land and stream are preserved. Probably Mr. Dixon would say the latter circumstance operates against

all bird life, except that of pheasants, partridges, and grouse. That is not so, really. Take the Grey family as an example. They own some of the best, and much of the wildest, land in the North. But ornithology is a tradition and a passion with them. Sir Edward Grey, for instance, knows birds as well as he does the South African Blue Books. Earl Grey is fascinated by the same study, and the relative who manages his estates, together with a dozen others, is peculiarly interested in wild life. Now, with angling stopped, and tourists shut off from the mountains—you cannot go to drink out of Marmion's Well, or climb Cheviot, without permission—is it not probable that the fauna is undergoing change? We have the best authority for saying that it is, and what has taken place in one district is occurring elsewhere. If Sir Edward Grey would only give us that book on birds which he has so frequently been asked to write, it is probable that this view would be confirmed.

Of course, this is not written in a spirit of fault-finding with Mr. Dixon. He knows his birds well, and it would be asking an impossibility to expect that one man should deal intimately with the vast tract of land he covers. His writing is generally good, and sometimes very good indeed, but it would be improved by the elimination of such eccentricities as the habitual use of *passere* as the singular of *passeres*. Mr. Whympers's illustrations are beyond praise.

The American and the Provencal Amorists.

The Troubadours at Home. By Justin H. Smith. 2 vols. (Putnam's.)

ONE needs a particular variety of mind to be greatly interested in the troubadours of tradition. The practical man, for example, can see nothing in them whatever but midsummer madness. To write long odes to a lady's eyebrows, and, more, to sing them under the walls of an insanitary castle at midnight, to the accompaniment of a guitar—this is nothing in a practical man's way. Had the ordinary troubadour the desire to make the lady his wife it might be different; but for the most part the lady was already married (although "Provence," said Daudet, "is polygamous"), and two or three other troubadours were engaged in compiling similar aggregations of amorous tropes for the same lady; each poet's aim being less to induce her to smile upon him than to win the approval of the judge to whom the rival effusions would be submitted. All this discourages the practical man from extending his sympathies to the Provencal brotherhood of amorists. The romantic minded reader has more tenderness for them, but it is probable that he, too, would like something less poetical and more practical. The schoolboy is interested in Blondel, the friend of Richard Cœur de Leon, but to carry a guitar when one might carry a battle-axe does not strike him as a brilliant choice of weapon. Without enumerating other types of readers, it may be said that among us Northerners the troubadour of tradition is somewhat lacking in fascination. He belongs to the region of comic opera. We tolerate him as a gay, witty, insouciant fellow, good company enough in his frothy way, and there we leave him.

But the facts of his character are otherwise. In these two large entertaining and patient volumes the troubadour stands out as a more complete, a more all-round man than tradition has permitted him to be: a fighter as well as a singer, a lover as well as a love-maker, a man of affairs as well as a jester. Mr., or Professor, Smith (for the author is Professor of Modern History at Dartmouth College in America) writes the history of the troubadours with extraordinary minuteness; and the ordinary reader will lay down his two large volumes with a very different idea of their worth from that with which he took them up.

Perhaps Mr. Smith is too fond of conjecturing as to the habits of his heroes, but for the most part the account is sober and, we feel assured, accurate. As a specimen of his imaginative faculty as well as of the variousness of the troubadour character, take this passage—a picture of the state of Provence on one bright morning in 1182:

Marcabru, Raimbaut d'Aurenga, and the Countess of Dia have passed off the stage, and Sordel is not yet alive; but most of the great singers are somewhere to be found. Bernart de Ventadorn, too old for violent pleasures, is just sitting down to a quiet game of chess in the palace of Toulouse; while Peire Rogier is pacing slowly back and forth in the cloister of Grammont, and his old love—Ermengarda of Narbonne—discusses with King Amfos the wisdom of leaguening themselves with Henry II. of England against the Count of Toulouse. Faidit might be seen climbing the zigzags of Ventadorn with a new song for Maria. Stormy Born is raving about Autafort, preparing to oust his brother; while his bookish neighbour, Bornell, thankful to be out of the battle at his native place, is far on the way to Spain, wishing he could forget the inconstant Escaronha. Daniel could be found in Beauville "swimming up-stream" with all his might, while Vidal, looking often at his ring, sighs for the beautiful Viscountess of Marseille. Peire d'Alvernhe, not in a sentimental mood this morning, is recovering from last night's concert in the castle hall of Puivert by hunting the deer, and the Monk of Montaudon has just rolled out of bed at Aurillac after making a night of it.

That passage gives the temper of the book. It is a leisurely pageant of hot Southerners, singing, fighting, loving, pretending to love, blustering, laughing, philosophising; and the background is Provence, with its wonderful old walls, its sunny, lazy life, its roses, its bright eyes, its flashes of colour. Truly a fascinating book, the fruit of true zeal, the reflection of a very agreeable temperament.

The fault of Mr. Smith's book is its length. His subject so pleases him that he cannot restrain his enthusiasm: he babbles on and on, translating here, paraphrasing there, fondling the towns with the love of an Old Mortality, eulogising his heroes, telling of pretty little personal adventures on his road. He writes very well (and very differently from professors of modern history in English colleges) and his mind is gay and sympathetic and his eyes and ears ever alert for pleasant impressions. This being so, we are the more sorry that his book is so unwieldy. It contains something like 350,000 words when 100,000 would have been ample. Perhaps some day he will treat the whole work as a quarry from which to dig out a block of pure marble. Or he might cut the book into two; for not only are the historical portions, the biographies and criticisms of the troubadours, good, but Mr. Smith's own narrative is good too—something in the manner of the *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes*, yet by no means imitative or derivative. One adventure, indeed, Mr. Smith had in common with R. L. S. (and in common also with another lover of old France, Mr. Hamerton): he was arrested as a spy. We quote part of the account of the judicial proceedings:

"Who are you?"

"An American."

"Grossly improbable, monsieur. What are you here for?"

"To find the picturesque and the historic."

"What do you find of that sort here?"

"Exceedingly little."

"Ah, you are looking for the picturesque and the historic and you come to a place where there is neither! You refute yourself. It is very grave, monsieur."

He shook his head and nodded solemnly to himself a long time, and I began to feel rather guilty.

"Very singular, monsieur, very singular. Have you no papers, nothing?"

"Oh, yes!" I handed him a letter from our embassy in Paris, recommending me to the authorities of southern France.

"It is a forgery," he exclaimed after reading it. "Anybody could get up such a letter. How do I know whose signature that is? It is not authentic. It is a forgery. If it were genuine, why didn't you produce it sooner?"

I was clearly convicted, not only by his logic, but by my own papers.

The incident is presented with humour. Mr. Smith can write also like this of the Provencal people of to-day. The town referred to is Aix:

The only live people seem to be the small tradesmen, and they live only once a week. Every one has a *bastide*, a garden in the suburbs, and he may always be found there on Sunday. In the shade of his arbour he drains a flagon of good wine, expands his chest, bandies mocking pleasantries, sings out the old songs of Provence, and with a turn of the eye repeats its old proverbs: "A man's shadow is worth a hundred women"; "To lie well is a talent, to lie ill a vice"; "One half of the world laughs at the other half"; "Praise the sea, but stay on dry land"; "Water spoils wine, carts spoil roads, women spoil men."

There is enough there to show that he entered the country in the right spirit. And here is another proof of Mr. Smith's non-professorial fitness to be the historian of the Midi and its happy folk. Henri, it should be explained, was conveying Mr. Smith to Courthézon. Henri, who was expecting to be met, suddenly exclaimed: "Oh, there they are! there they are; they are coming!" Mr. Smith continues:

Three specks are crawling along the edge of the shrubbery, a quarter of a mile away.

"It is my sister and her *cousine* from the farm; and oh! *la petite fillette*. Venez donc, venez donc." Then realising that they cannot hear a word, and will be long in arriving, he dashes down the hill like a chamois.

After a while they all come tugging up together. *La cousine* is a buxom country girl of sixteen almond harvests, and *La Petite* a demoiselle of six, with short hair tied in a humorous queue. The *bise* whisks off a hat—never mind, it is recovered. The *cousine's* skirt blows into her face; the purple ribbon comes off the *fillette's* queue and the hair flies blustering over her face—never mind, so much the more fun. *La Petite* trips on a big stone, and is righted up with a pull and a shout. So up they come, laughing and chattering, putting themselves to rights and getting put wrong again by the pranky wind, holding each other fast, and Henri holding most of all the rosy *cousine*.

Other New Books.

OUR STOLEN SUMMER.

BY MARY STUART BOYD.

A tour of the world is no new thing, and critical guns are ready loaded with the terrible word "hackneyed" to fire at the adventurer whose pen is dedicated to any region less novel than a "virgin peak." Yet every record in which the adventurer has described what lives and changes, rather than what vegetates imperturbably in museums and galleries, is a fresh record and worth the reading. Of such is Mrs. Boyd's volume, which her husband has illustrated profusely with spirited line drawings. The travellers were part-spectators of the mild explosion known as the Samoan war, but it would be absurd to call the bombardment of Apia the centre-piece of the book. The description of a Tongan wedding is more to our mind. In it we learn that "a pillow is the one article of actual furniture indispensable in the starting of a South Sea Island home." As it appears that "stools of dark polished wood" are "distinctive Tongan pillows," we may suppose that the saying "uneasy lies the head that wears the crown" has in Tonga lost its peculiar pathos. Writing on the Tongan coaling station Mrs. Boyd says:

Owing to the still lingering influence of the singularly comprehensive code of crimes framed by the notorious

missionary-politician, Shirley Baker, almost everybody in Nukualofa is serving a term of punishment for some half-imaginary offence. One of these laws forbids any man to wear the shoulders uncovered—a rule which, apart from the discomfort entailed thereby in a tropical climate, has proved conducive to pulmonary disease; as during the frequent heavy rains the thin outer vests get drenched, and moisture that would roll harmlessly off a well-oiled skin is apt to bequeath a chill when left to dry on the body.

Mrs. Boyd is under the impression that in Maoriland her party witnessed the *haka*, but the scandalous nature of the *haka* (*vide* Mr. Kerry-Nicholls's *King Country*, p. 87) renders it probable that they were entertained by a comparatively decorous substitute. The tourists finished their land-travels in the United States. How times have changed there, to be sure! What would a certain Mr. Legree say to this: "In Central Park, on Sunday afternoon, we saw a benevolent-appearing, gold-spectacled negro, attired in superfine broadcloth, taking an airing in his handsome carriage with a white coachman and footman on the box." Chinatown, in 'Frisco, seems to have revealed to Mrs. Boyd the secret of the Celestial's toilet. "The length and thickness of the pigtailed surprised us," she writes, "until we discovered that all were closely intertwined with strands of black silk." Master Boyd's fleeting eligibility for half-price tickets determined the epoch of the expedition, and his foot-gear (renewed from time to time) supplies his mother with a humorous topic. Beer is beer, even small beer; and who would grudge a kindly, serious, intelligent Englishwoman her little joke? (Blackwood. 18s.)

GREATER CANADA.

BY E. B. OSBORN, B.A.

What do we owe to the Hudson's Bay Company? The "peaceful acquisition," says Mr. Osborn, "of a territory as large as the whole of Europe." Prince Rupert was the Company's first governor; "our dear and entirely beloved cousin" Charles II. quaintly calls him in the Royal Charter for Incorporating the Hudson's Bay Company, granted in 1670. In this useful book, which contains a map, the text of the charter, a chronological table of North-western history and other supplements, Mr. Osborn attempts a combination of historical events and emigrant's practical guide. The historical part is rather tantalising. It is conceivable that a large section of the public have forgotten the career of Louis Riel, with which Mr. Osborn evidently supposes them to be familiar, although this "descendant of St. Louis" made such stir in 1870 and 1885, indulged in the picturesque diet of blood cooked in milk, and lived to be hanged. Many will turn to these pages for information about gold. They will be warned off the Klondike if they trust Mr. Osborn, for it would seem that the royalty on the production claimed by the Government prohibits a claim owner from making any profit to speak of even on a winter's work resulting in 75,000 dollars' worth of dust.

It is not generally known [says Mr. Osborn] that the first discovery of gold in British Columbia occurred in 1852—six years before the Great Rush to the Fraser River—at Mitchell Harbour, on the west coast of the Queen Charlotte Islands.

Mr. Osborn suggests that young men "capable of acquiring and applying a modicum of scientific knowledge" might go to the old placer mining camps resolved to trace "the gold of alluvial diggings to its source in the living-rock." But Mr. Osborn does not allow his reader to forget the fur industry, which, after all, is the oldest source of wealth in Greater Canada. In conclusion, the philosopher, with his eye on future rack rents, may reasonably regret the system which admits of the acquisition of extensive and valuable freeholds in new colonies by private individuals. (Chatto. 3s. 6d.)

Fiction.

"My First Book."

The Gentleman from Indiana. By Booth Tarkington. (Grant Richards. 6s.)

A Lady of the Regency. By Mrs. Stepney Rawson. (Hutchinson. 6s.)

A Kent Squire. By F. W. Hayes. (Hutchinson. 6s.)

COMPLAINT is often made that, in the "rush" of modern literary production, the first books of new authors are bruised against the wall and trodden under foot, and that much promising merit is thereby stifled and lost. Further, it is stated that, established authors being perfectly capable of succouring themselves, literary criticism should direct its Samaritan attentions first and chiefly to the unestablished, not only out of kindness to the unestablished, but for the good of literature and mankind. We have here three first novels by three new novelists, carefully selected and upraised from the seething mass of the latest fiction, and the curious thing is that all three authors, in their respective ways, are likely to do well and achieve prosperity of sorts. Now it is a mistake to imagine, as many do, that a first novel usually bears the outward signs of being a first novel—marks of immaturity, ignorance, misdirected strength, or splendid error. The history of the great novelists supports this contention. Consider *Waverley*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Treasure Island*, and de Maupassant's *Boule de Suif*. Quite probably the average excellence of first novels is higher than the average excellence of second, third, tenth, or *n*th novels. Most authors spend themselves more lavishly upon the first book than upon any other. Time is nothing, trouble is nothing, expense of spirit is nothing—in the writing of that adored and marvellous volume. As regards the three novels named at the head of this article, no one could assert from internal evidence that they were the first-fruits of talent. It is by no means a case of the young idea timorously putting forth its pale green shoot. Therefore, the attitude of the critic towards them must be even as his attitude towards other novels, and not that of the old gentleman patting clever youngsters on the head.

He is indeed a bold reviewer who would pat Mr. Booth Tarkington on the head. For *The Gentleman from Indiana* has sold fifty thousand copies in America, and in unenthusiastic England has reached a second edition. It is of course an American novel. Mr. Tarkington takes the tiny township of Plattville, Carlow County, State of Indiana, and presents it to you with a decidedly attractive admixture of wit and sentiment. The reasons of his popularity are plain on the face of the book. The description of Plattville, with which the story opens, has an admirable *verve*, and shows also much fine observation. It is not the observation, however, but the rather pert and irresponsible wit that tells. "People did not come to Plattville to live, except through the inadvertency of being born there." Lo! a phrase which the reader can seize, laugh at, and remember. Having prepared his environment, Mr. Tarkington plants into it a hero at once heroic and lovable. John Harkless—"the great John Harkless" he was called at College—is really a charming character, not conceived at all on original lines, but nevertheless genuinely and forcefully conceived. It is the function of Harkless, journalist, to wake up Plattville, and he does so in a manner effectively dramatic. Plattville begins to move, and one of its first actions is to raise Harkless to the height of demi-god. The hero falls into love and into danger. Caught at last by the "White-Caps," those marauders whom he had tried to extinguish and whom the inhabitants of Plattville could not teach him to fear, he is witched away, and given up for dead. Naturally he arrives again, shaken but sound, and when he discovers

that the heroine has been conducting his newspaper for him with extraordinary acumen and success, there is no alternative but a *finale* of orange-blossoms. Helen, this lady journalist, has the true heroine's strength and fascination. "When you saw her, or heard her, or managed to be around, anywhere she was, why, if you couldn't get up no hope of marryin' her, you wanted to marry *somebody*." (Another phrase!) The principal fault of Mr. Tarkington's novel is an occasional uncertainty in the handling of the narrative—a tendency to diffuseness, to go nowhere in particular. The merit of it lies in its sincerity, the richness of its imaginative inspiration, and its continual surprising wittiness. There is stuff in the book, and plenty of it. We may express the hope that Mr. Tarkington will perpend upon the question of style. His writing is loose and undistinguished, and he has scarcely even begun to put a valuation on words as words.

Mrs. Stepney Rawson, the author of *A Lady of the Regency*, is clearly a stylist by instinct. She has the literary temperament, which fondles words, and treats them like human beings (as they ought to be treated). In various respects, her novel is the most promising of the three before us. Decidedly, it is the most finished literary achievement, and the most ambitious in conception. Mrs. Rawson has occupied herself with an historical period unaccountably overlooked by novelists in search of fresh woods and pastures new—1800 to 1820. The central, but not the chief, personage of the story is the Regent's wife, Caroline of Brunswick, that figure which, to the haughty eyes of history, would be ridiculous were it not almost intolerably pathetic. June Cherier, the heroine, and the "lady" of the title, becomes a Court damsel after the ruin of the gigantic North Country squire her father, and the plot moves amid all the complicated mazes of Court intrigue. Mrs. Rawson has dealt royally with her royalties. She gives dignity even to Caroline, and her portrait of the Prince Regent is brilliant. Queen Charlotte and the Princess Charlotte are equally good. The scenes between the Prince Regent and June Cherier, between Caroline and that flawless gentleman Mr. Stephen Heseltine, and between Queen Charlotte and Mr. Frewin, are all executed in the true elevated romantic manner. In particular, the closing chapters of Caroline's futile career, and her exclusion from Westminster Abbey on Coronation Day, have a mournful dramatic impressiveness which sticks in the memory. *A Lady of the Regency* seems to us to be, in a special sense, the direct and honest expression of a literary individuality—an individuality sensitive, intense, and courageous. The characters are out of one mould; every one, good and bad, noble and despicable, has distinction; spectrum analysis would reveal the same prismatic colours in each. In short, all the acquired cautiousness of the reviewer cannot hinder us from asserting that *A Lady of the Regency* is a remarkable novel. It handles a large theme largely, it offers a complete picture of an epoch, and it does not once fail at a critical point. Perhaps it might with advantage have been a little shorter. We have not, for instance, discovered the exact *raison d'être* of Chapters X., XI., and XII., and we scarcely think that the early marriage of the heroine enters with sufficient usefulness into the scheme of motivation.

Mr. F. W. Hayes is much more hackneyed in subject and methods; but he appears to have in him the root of a popular success. He does again, but somewhat differently, what has been done a thousand times before. His subtitle—"Being a Record of Certain Adventures of Ambrose Gwynett, Esquire, of Thornhaugh"—must inevitably give pause to the reader satiated with conventional *fantasias* upon the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Mr. Hayes has immense fertility in the invention of incident, though none of his incident is precisely new, and his use of coincidence (see, for example, that on p. 162) is too free. The characters are for the most part stock figures, doing

the usual feats, and uttering the usual sentiments. Take the soliloquy of that smooth villain, the Abbé Gaultier, on p. 20: "So," he said to himself venomously, "it is M. Ambrose Gwynett of Thornhaugh—what devils of names!—who is in the way. All the worse for M. Ambrose Gwynett of Thornhaugh. Muriel Dorrington is for me, M. Gwynett—for me, Arnaud Gaultier, if a hundred of you stood in my way." From such a speech the whole novel might be deduced. Mr. Hayes's originality lies in his fixed determination not to be tedious, but to "cut the cackle and come to the 'osses." He has apparently tried to make his novel as much like a play as possible. No descriptions, no divagations, no neat little essays, but all action and rapid dialogue. If it is necessary to clear the ground, the ground is cleared by the characters themselves in dramatic converse. Playgoers will remember Sardou's old trick of beginning a scene with a couple of explanatory gossiping servants. This device is very well, used in moderation; but we think Mr. Hayes has carried it to excess. For the rest, his novel is distinctly readable, despite its length—444 close pages, and a sequel threatened!

Notes on Novels.

[These notes on the week's Fiction are not necessarily final.
Reviews of a selection will follow.]

VOICES IN THE NIGHT. BY FLORA ANNIE STEEL.

Mrs. Steel's new story is a veritable warehouse of Indian goods. The story centres in the family of Sir George Arbuthnot, Lieut.-Governor of Nushapore. Plague and famine and superstition and treason play their parts, and the depths of Indian life, European and native, are plumbed. The spirit of the book is hinted at in these words of the Prologue: "The threatening voice paused as a dull reverberation shivered through the chill air. It was the first gun of the Imperial salute which every New Year's morning proclaims that Victoria, *Kaiser-i-hind*, reigns over the fog, and the voices in it . . . Between the beats of the guns the voices had their way unchecked. About what? That is a difficult question to answer when the voices are in the night." (Heinemann. 6s.)

LOVE AND MR. LEWISHAM. BY H. G. WELLS.

Here Mr. Wells reverts to the quiet matter and manner of his *Wheels of Chance*. Mr. Lewisham is a young school-master who hangs a *schema* of work, and sundry splendid mottoes, on his bedroom walls, where he "could see them afresh every morning as his head came through his shirt." He is but eighteen when we meet him, and is thinking "little of Love, but much of Greatness." But Mr. Wells makes him think of love; makes him marry hastily; makes the *schema* turn yellow and crumpled; and makes us enjoy the humours and poignancies of a hasty marriage with its sweetness, squalor, and exclusion of Greatness from Mr. Lewisham's life. (Harper & Brothers. 6s.)

URSULA. BY K. DOUGLAS KING.

Ursula's governess wrote of her when she was eight and a half: "She wishes to dominate me, and generally tries to take the lead in the household. . . . At present she walks like a young savage, and is absolutely ignorant. . . . When I asked her, sarcastically, if she could do anything, she replied with impertinent coolness: 'Well, I bet I can saddle my pony faster than Jim (the stable boy) can; and I cured our collie when he had fits, when even the vet. had given him up.'" Ursula has Russian relatives, goes to them, and has adventures in travel and love. A bright story. (Lane. 6s.)

THE FOOTBALL OF FATE. BY MRS. J. H. RIDDELL.

A typical story of English life, by the author of *The Senior Partner*, and many other novels. Country-house

people, London people, up-river people walk and talk at Abbotsmead. "Each day some fresh fact enlivened Abbotsmead. First it was bruited about that Foster had been commissioned to erect a temporary ballroom, and people asked: 'What! isn't Rosebank large enough?' . . . She engaged the Riverford String Band." (White & Co. 6s.)

LIFE'S TRIVIAL ROUND. BY ROSA N. CAREY.

Miss Carey's new novel is in the minor domestic key which she has made her own. "I Take Possession of the Brown Parlour," "A Controversy about the West Room," "Hope Helps to Shell the Peas," and "I Take Possession of the Porch Room" are chapter headings which prepare us for the last, "The Chiming of Wedding Bells." (Hutchinson. 6s.)

GEORGE LINWOOD. BY W. NAISMITH.

A kailyard story, full of ministers, and goodness, and etiquette. The author's fine writing makes for laughter. Two lovers on a sofa: "They sat thus—they took no note of time—their faces, sunbeams; their souls, suns—in silent ecstasy—perhaps the period in most human lives of the purest, sweetest ecstasy; they sat thus for the space of fifteen minutes, shining, and were so shining when Mrs. St. Clare, who had left the room when they had sat down together with the album, entered again." (Gardner. 6s.)

UNLEAVENED BREAD. BY ROBERT GRANT.

A big study of American life, with the heroine's divorce proceedings early in the story. The local politics of Benham are the background to Selma White's principles and loves. "On the following day Lyons vetoed the Gas Bill" is not an inspiring sentence in itself, but it occurs in the rounding-off of an interesting story. (Hutchinson. 6s.)

THE CHICAMON STONE. BY CLIVE PHILLIPS-WOOLLEY.

A gallant story of fortune-hunting in Alaska, with much of Indians and volcanoes thrown in, by the author of *Gold, Gold in Cariboo*. (Smith, Elder. 6s.)

COLONIAL BORN. BY G. FIRTH SCOTT.

A tale of the Queensland bush. The heroine, Aileen, is a typical colonial girl, a horsewoman and a fluent talker. Of gold-seeking life there is plenty in the chapters called "The Rout of Boulder Creek" and "The Sway of Gold." (Sampson Low. 6s.)

DANIEL HERRICK. BY SIDNEY ROBERT BURCHELL.

The hero, who tells the story, is a news-writer of the reign of Charles II., and he becomes mixed up with a secret revolutionary party, and is sentenced to death. But Margery's happiness is not sacrificed. The King, Lady Castlemaine, and other ladies of the Court are introduced, and the historical basis of the story has been carefully laid. (Gay & Bird. 6s.)

ROBIN HOOD. BY A. ALEXANDER.

"A romance of the English Forest." "S'death. . . . List! . . . 'Have at them!' . . . 'Good, my lord' . . . 'Thou sittest thy Saladin like a leech, but I jolt me up an' down like a popinjay.'" (Burleigh. 6s.)

THE THORN BIT. BY DOROTHEA CONYERS.

"She puzzled for a moment, and then found the correct horsey terms for the bay's faults. 'Too leggy, and no bone,' she said discontentedly." These are typical sentences from this novel of fox-hunting, dancing, Queen's Hussars, and the Murphy girls. For motto, Mr. Kipling's:

Pleasant the snaffle of Courtship, improving the manners and carriage,

But the colt who is wise will abstain from the terrible thorn bit of Marriage.

(Hutchinson. 6s.)

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The A.B.C. of Maeterlinck.

It were an easy matter to make fun of Maeterlinck. One has but to dwell upon peculiarities in the form of his expression, regardless of the spirit and meaning out of which they arise. This was done recently with some success in a review article.

Those who wish to approach Maeterlinck seriously, to know what he is and what he has to say, will not be deterred by superficial eccentricities. Take, for instance, the propensity of his dramatic characters to the repetition of words and phrases and exclamations. Who that has studied human nature has not observed its tendency in times of great soul stress to use over and over again the same simple words or exclamations until they become fraught with the awful significance of intense pain, of great passion, of supreme gladness? To quote instances of this in Shakespeare, where they are so many and so well known, were superfluous. But let anyone call up the closing scenes of "Othello," for example, and note the "iteration," as Othello himself calls it, when Emilia's amazement can find no other expression for a time than the repeated utterance of "My husband." Mark how Othello harps on a word and repeats an exclamation.

Of course, this sort of thing must be born of insight and feeling. When a writer, once having observed this tendency of an overwrought mind to repetition, resorts to it as a mechanical device for the conjuring up of an emotion which he does not feel, the effect is fatal. His work then ceases to be art: it degenerates into artifice. It has been charged against Maeterlinck that he does this. Perhaps it does sometimes seem that the situation is not sufficiently intense to make these repeated exclamations and observations quite natural.

It is not unfrequently the case that an artist feels a situation more strongly than he can vividly set it forth, and his expressions are then apt to be born rather of his own feeling of the situation than of the situation as presented to the spectator. In such a case he is to be charged with imperfect command over his material and of the vehicle of expression which he has chosen, but by no means with device and insincerity.

And there are in Maeterlinck many examples of this repetition being inevitable. That is to say, the dramatist has so entered into the heart of his characters that what he makes them say is what they could not but say; is, indeed, the natural and inevitable expression of themselves under given circumstances. Take, *e.g.*, Selysette's repeated statement: "I was leaning over and I fell." She has sacrificed herself for the happiness of the other two. But, to secure the fruit of her sacrifice—the happiness of the others—they must not know that she has thrown herself down. Their joy in each other would be dashed by their remembrance of the price paid for it—the life of Selysette. But in great pain and with fast fading strength she cannot elaborate her explanation. By a sublime instinct she reserves her strength for the maintaining of her purpose. Her mind is fixed. No amount of pleading and persuasion can shake her resolution. In answer to all expostulations and appeals she quietly repeats: "I was leaning

over and I fell. I was leaning over and I fell." This steadily-maintained prevarication reveals and illumines as nothing else could do the greatness and beauty of the simple and inarticulate soul of Selysette, beside whom Aglavaine, with all her fine speeches, becomes dwarfed, and Melleander is contemptible. And so in other instances that might be given, this repetition has such intense and revealing force, is so instinct with soul, that it can only be the offspring of that which it reveals.

It is not as an artist that Maeterlinck appeals to the majority of his readers. They do not greatly concern themselves with art. They are people who have their lives to live, their burdens to bear, their problems to solve, their appointed tasks to perform, their loves, their sorrows, their disappointments, and their temptations to go through with, and who withal have their desire for the grace and culture of life. What they feel after in a writer is not perfection of artistic form, but wisdom and guidance in daily life. It is to such people that Maeterlinck brings great help. How then does he help them? What has he to say to them? What, in a word, is Maeterlinck's gospel?

It is, after all, a very simple one and ancient. He preaches it with a new emphasis, sheds new light upon it, draws new and sometimes startling deductions from it; but it is in reality the everlasting gospel which one finds in all great religions, in all great poetry, and in all true philosophy, for Maeterlinck in drama and essay never ceases to preach the supremacy, the sufficiency, and the imperishable beauty of Soul. But so peculiarly has Maeterlinck made this region of the soul his home, and so remarkably has he set forth subtle and elusive phases and fleeting aspects of the soul, moods of the soul well-nigh inexpressible and tenses transitory as a dream, that what he says comes to us at times with almost the force of a new revelation. Because of this dealing with the soul, and with the more obscure movements of the soul, he has been called a mystic, more a mystic than an artist, with the assumption that mysticism is destructive of art. Great art has again and again been mystical, has again and again dwelt in the spell-bound twilight land which lies between the Known and the Unknown. Whether we call Maeterlinck a mystic or not depends on our definition of mysticism. In the present writer's understanding of the term he is a mystic, and is not, therefore, a worse artist nor a less reliable teacher.

But if any were to insist on his own definition of mysticism, and to say that a mystic is one who has lost his hold upon reality, who has shut his ears and closed his eyes to the actual, who has got drunk upon his own nerve fluid, deeming it the wine of God, who has become enamoured of the vagaries of his own brain, and watches it spin upon nothing, regarding its intoxicated gyrations as more momentous than the motion of the spheres, we should simply content ourselves with protesting that Maeterlinck is not a mystic, for he keeps his eyes steadily on facts: only they are not the facts which lie open to observation, but rather the shy facts of life which lurk in dim corners, which elude us in dark ancestral forests, which appear for a moment and then vanish down some long corridor of the mind, or drown themselves in some deep moat, or get locked within a gloomy fastness where the light of day never penetrates. Maeterlinck has made it his business to set on the servants of the soul to open the doors of these ancient castles and let in the day, to remove the barriers and investigate those dimly lighted corridors, to drag the moats and hunt in the forests. These doors are hard to open, they have been closed so long; and one is apt to get lost in these forests. But there is a reward: we find some new and beautiful ideal. For illustration let the reader consult again the first and second scenes of "Pélléas and Mélisande," where the Doorkeeper objects to open the door, and bids the servants: "Out by the little doors; out by the little doors; there are enough of them"; and where Goland, hunting a Beast through the forest to

slay it, finds a Beauty that has lost its crown through excessive grief, as soul-beauty so often does; a Beauty that has come from far, far away, and that by so many has been hurt.

In *The Treasure of the Humble* and in *Wisdom and Destiny* we find the same earnest search after the hidden beauty and wisdom of the soul. It is this finding of the subtle ideas which vaguely haunt our souls day by day, expressed in clear and beautiful language in the essays or hinted at in strangely beautiful symbolism in the plays, which makes the reading of Maeterlinck for the first time so new and delightful an experience to those whose delight is in the inner world, and who are desirous to learn both how far this inner life influences the outer, and how to make its influence yet greater. Imagine a man dreaming frequently of certain places and people, vaguely recalling his dreams, yet dismissing them as vain and idle fancies, though they are shaping his daily life, then coming one day all unexpectedly upon the people and places of his dreams—how he would recognise them, how delight in them; how, beholding them clothed with dignity and beauty and all the marks of reality, while the things of his waking moments seem but the shadows and images of these, his faith in his dreams is strengthened—and you will form some idea of what Maeterlinck means to those who can understand him. Thoughts that have dwelt in unappreciated loveliness in the dark recesses of the mind; hopes and aspirations which have flitted like fairies in the pale moonlight of the soul have been gently seized and firmly held by Maeterlinck, and are allowed to reveal themselves, their eternal reality, and their high office.

The soul, he tells us, knows no distinctions of great and small in events or circumstances. To it the kiss of two lovers is as great an occasion as the wreck of an empire or the creation of a people. Out of one or the other it can draw inspiration. The joys and sorrows of the household, the smile of a child, the tears of an old man, quite as much as the affairs of a nation, are the doors and windows through which the soul can reveal to us the Infinite. Why wait for a bolt to shoot out of the blue ere we are awakened? Why wait for great sorrows, great events, great joys, great occasions? The force that makes the bolt dwell in all things, is moving around us and within us constantly. We have but to learn how to approach it, how to manipulate it, and every day, every hour may become great.

Things Seen.

The Beggar.

I PEERED through the rain-covered windows, and saw the early-lit street lamps shine tremulously in the raw damp atmosphere.

An old man was slowly walking up the hill, and at each house he knocked, waiting patiently till the door was opened, and then, as if he were briefly dismissed, turning as patiently away to recommence his task.

He was decently clad, and in no way resembled the ordinary beggar. His hair was white and dishevelled, and his aspect was one of pathetic, hopeless poverty.

A sudden pity stirred my heart.

I drew the coppers from my purse and waited, for surely he would not miss my door. He had as yet missed no house in the road.

How tired and downcast he looked as he paused for a moment at the gate, evidently debating his chance.

Why did I not tap the window-pane?

He passed my house, and a dull surprise, a paralysing torpor, stole over me, as with fascinated gaze I watched him pass by, his shadowy bent figure gradually fading from my sight.

From the Well Deck.

SHEER joy of life illuminated her rugged, labour-weary face; the hard lines of her brow smoothed wonderfully; her mouth was twisted in strenuous effort not to smile; yet the causes of her pleasure were so small! To us, the first class passengers on board s.s. *C— Castle*, "Southwards-bound," it seemed sufficiently pathetic that to win the third prize in the egg-and-spoon race of ship's sports should cause a triumph so abundant, a jubilation so supreme, in this one third class competitor.

Prize-giving day came laggingly, she with it at an early hour. Long before the time announced upon the programme, we saw her skip up the "companion" from the well-deck, a plain, squat, elderly, unattractive woman, dressed in her every-day skirt of much patched cotton—I think it was her only one—and a maroon flannel blouse. Her battered straw hat, limp from tropical use, was worn on one side with a certain jauntiness; her face was aflame with heated expectation: red nervous fingers gripped and twisted a grimy handkerchief as she leant up against the rail, cheek by jowl with the daughter of a marquis, and facing a duke—on this, perhaps, the one proud moment of her life.

One by one the winners' names were called, the rewards apportioned. The egg-and-spoon race was low down on the list. As the cheers rang out the old woman's joy rose in ascending scale; she shook with excitement; her breath came gustily; her eyes were eager, anxious, alive with expectation.

At last!

"The winners of the egg-and-spoon race are: 1st, Lady —; secondly, Mrs. A —."

No third prize?

At first we could not believe our ears. Nor could she. She looked at us, the assembled crowd, with the scared expression of a scolded child; she caught at the rail to steady herself; her jaw dropped; a shutter fell on the joy of her face. Someone said "Hush!" beneath his breath as the cheers re-echoed when Lady — stepped forward to receive her fourth first prize.

The first shock over, the old woman nerved herself to turn away. Very old she seemed as she looked timidly upon the steep "companion" she had scaled so cheerily an hour before. . . . There had been witnesses of the incident. There were hurried whisperings, exchanges, consultations. As the woman turned drearily, the voice of the hon. secretary rang out with special clearness: "We regret that the announcement of the winner of the third prize in the egg-and-spoon race was unfortunately omitted. Mrs. Garlick, please come and take your prize."

How we cheered!

Wind and City.

WHEN I revisit, on a night of stars,
The encampment old and foul of London's horde
And pierce the smoke of sluggish lusts and wars
Still from that blotch of lath and plaster poured,
How do I rage that in a blast more keen
I from Fate's mountain trumpet am not blown
And all this dingy frailty bestrown
With "*Strike tents, millions, let your lair be clean!*"
With what a glee would I divide the swarm!
A third should soar and whistle to the veldt
To feel the ancestral sun—a third should melt
Into honeyed forest far—and a third storm
Settle on Andes: but the morrow here
Should find the brow of Ludgate green and clear.

HERBERT TRENCH.

Mathilde Blind's Poetry.*

MISS BLIND was a copious and apparently fluent—too fluent—writer. Her collected poems are equal, or nearly equal, in bulk to the collected poems of Shelley; and they have all Shelley's fatal facility, and Shelley's love for diffuseness. It does not need the evidence of Dr. Garnett's memoir to tell us that the poet of "Prometheus Unbound" was a chief influence with her. But there the resemblance ceases. In texture the poems are very different; there is nothing of Shelley's opulent imagination or fecund imagery. We cannot find any evidence that Miss Blind's "fundamental brain-power" (as Rossetti called it) in poetry exceeded that of numerous female writers less voluminous and less noticed. The impression made upon us is one of ambitious mediocrity—could we find a less harsh term we would use it. Yet it is precisely upon this fundamental substance that Dr. Garnett insists. We do not deny that there is brain-power, of a kind, in "The Ascent of Man" and other poems which could be named. But it belongs rather to the prose-thinker than the poet, to the rationalising faculty than to the imaginative intuition. That (as Dr. Garnett relates) it should captivate a man of science we can well understand; but no over-laying with poetic forms and description can make that poetic which was not conceived through the imagination, or hide the secret of its birth. The true poet does not think first and imagine afterwards, but the processes are indissolubly blended *ab initio*. In regard to form, Dr. Garnett admits that Miss Blind was deficient, and laments the preoccupation, with truth, which left her indifferent to artistic externalities. But, apart from the fact that a poet indifferent to art is scarce thinkable (however impetuosity may betray him into negligences of art, or defective taste blind him to lapses in art), there seems to us in Miss Blind something more than carelessness of or indifference to form. There seems something like an incapacity to sing, a lack of the instinct which "voluntary moves harmonious numbers." Otherwise the shaping spirit would sometimes take the matter into its own hands, compelling the reluctant verse to momentary loveliness of perfect form—as happens frequently with poets the most admittedly negligent of art. But this, we are bound to say, we do not find in Miss Blind; and the absence of it confirms us in the impression derived from the manner and movement of her verse.

"The Ascent of Man" is Miss Blind's longest and most ambitious poem; an apotheosis of evolution, which Dr. Garnett allows to be a failure, but a fine failure. For ourselves, we cannot see the touches of redeeming sublimity which he discerns in this chaotic and tense rather than intense poem. At its most effortful it is strained and excited—a painfully obvious striving beyond the poet's power. Its more level passages simply leave us cold. Here are some stanzas in which the author has put forth all her power:

Constellated suns, fresh lit, declining,
Were ignited now, now quenched in space,
Rolling round each other, or inclining
Orb to orb in multicoloured rays.
Ever showering from their flaming fountains
Light, more light, on each far-circling earth,
Till life stirred crepuscular seas, and mountains
Heaved convulsive with the throes of birth.

And the noble brotherhood of planets,
Knitted each to each by links of light,
Circled round their suns, nor knew a minute's
Lapse or languor in their ceaseless flight.
And pale moons and suns and burning splinters
Of wrecked worlds swept round their parent spheres,
Clothed with-spring or sunk in polar winters
As their sun draws nigh or disappears.

* The Poetical Works of Mathilde Blind. With a Memoir by Richard Garnett. (Unwin.)

In this crowd of words and colours and sound there is no one great and original phrase or idea which imposes itself on the mind at once. A few choric lines of Shelley would pale it all. In her less ambitious narrative poems Miss Blind can write pleasant descriptive passages, but without magic. Thus in "The Teamster":

Sam came a-courting while the year was blithe,
When wet-browed mowers, stepping out in tune,
With level stroke and rhythmic swing of scythe,
Smote down the proud grass in the pomp of June,
And wagons, half-tipped over, seemed to sway
With loads of hay.

But taken as wholes, they leave little impression, for she has no power over the emotions. For like reason, and from her lack of form, she is not successful in the brief lyric, though she has written much in this, as in all kinds. The sonnet Dr. Garnett judges one of her most successful fields, and two especially he singles out for excellence: the sonnet to "The Dead," and the almost equally impressive "Cleave Thou the Waves." In "The Dead" we have a sonnet really fine in substance, original in imagery, not undeserving of Dr. Garnett's phrase, "majestic."

The dead abide with us! Though stark and cold
Earth seems to grip them, they are with us still:
They have forged our chains of being for good or ill,
And their invisible hands these hands yet hold.
Our perishable bodies are the mould
In which their strong imperishable will—
Mortality's deep yearning to fulfil—
Hath grown incorporate through dim time untold.
Vibrations infinite of life in death,
As a star's travelling light survives its star!
So may we hold our lives that when we are
The fate of those who then will draw their breath,
They shall not drag us to their judgment bar,
And curse the heritage which we bequeath.

Note especially the strong image in the second line of the sestet. Yet even this sonnet seems rather forced into metre than to have moulded the metre to itself: it moves like a hay-wain under the load of thought; and we have sought vainly for another as fine. We may agree with Dr. Garnett that these poems show "energy, enthusiasm, aspiration towards the higher things." But, without high imagination, emotional power, or grace of form, those qualities are insufficient for vital poetry; and we cannot think that Miss Blind's place in poetry will be high.

Correspondence.

Mr. Andrew Lang and Myself on the Supremacy of Fiction.

SIR,—Mr. Lang accuses me of *ignoratio elenchi*. I dare counter-charge him with *petitio principii*. My elliptical sentences have fallen a prey to his humour and criticism. He has crushed me, though not my argument. The meaning of the following line "entirely escapes" Mr. Lang: "This taste of the crowd neither augments nor diminishes the number of serious readers—unless, indeed, towards reading at all." In other words, taste for light literature may augment the potential number of serious readers by imparting an inclination to read. My sense was clear if my sentence was elliptical. Mr. Lang asks, next, "equally greater than what?" Equally greater than nothing, but greater equally with the number of those who read novels of a paltry value. But criticism of my phraseology is not an answer to my argument. When Mr. Lang turns to that, he after all sides with me against himself. "I would liefer have written *Old Mortality* or *Esmond* than all the works of Locke." If my stumbling English has drawn that from Mr. Lang after his article in

the *Westminster*, I can but say that I have won my case, and that I will bear with being called "a lady controversialist." By the by, is a man who differs from another on some point, and expresses that difference, "a gentleman controversialist"? I suppose so, and yet . . . —I am, &c.,

FRANCES FORBES-ROBERTSON.

P.S.—I think that a great work of fiction will outlive any historical or philosophical effort, no matter by whom, and is of more value, for the reason that with time history loses vital interest, even significance, and philosophy grows obsolete at last, or becomes a summary of truisms we hardly care to peruse. However fine, historic or philosophic works remain, after all, but glorified school books, to be edited away to nothingness when a later age must fail to grasp their meaning. Let Mr. Lang look through his immense storehouse of knowledge and note how the fiction of antiquity remains the dominant key. *Prince Prigio* will doubtless be read when many "more serious" writings will be wholly forgotten.

Balzac.

MONSIEUR LE DIRECTEUR.—Ignorant malheureusement la langue anglaise, je viens seulement d'apprendre la publication dans le *ACADEMY* du 5 courant de l'article relatif aux lettres de Balzac, et je m'empresse de vous remercier pour la façon dont, en ce qui me concerne, vous avez apprécié les faits.

Je n'ai pas actuellement le loisir d'approfondir et de discuter toutes ces histoires de falsifications de textes, qui d'ailleurs ne me regardent en rien, étant très antérieures à mes travaux personnels, les seuls dont j'aie à répondre. Je me contenterai donc de vous affirmer que je possède, parmi beaucoup d'autres lettres autographes de Balzac :

1. Tout ce qui a été retrouvé de sa correspondance autographe avec Mme. Hanska, c'est à dire les *Lettres à l'Etrangère*.

2. L'autographe de la lettre à Mme. Surville du samedi 12 (Octobre 1833), dont le texte cité par moi page 79 d'*Un Roman d'Amour*, est absolument conforme à celui de l'original. En conséquence, rien ne m'est plus facile que de produire la preuve indiscutable de l'exactitude de cette citation.

Il en est de même pour le fragment de la *Quotidienne* reproduit dans mon livre, car il suffit de consulter la collection de ce journal pour constater que les lignes en question sont extraites, comme je l'ai dit, du numéro du 9 Décembre, 1832. Cette date aussi est donc incontestable, et la première lettre de Balzac à Mme. Hanska est bien de Janvier 1833.

Quant au renseignement relatif à un prétendu incendie ayant éclaté à Moscou, dans lequel la plus grande partie des lettres de Balzac à Mme. Hanska aurait péri, ce renseignement n'a été fourni que par la veuve de Balzac elle-même, et ce n'est que d'après ses instructions qu'il a été livré jadis au public. La preuve qu'il est de tous points contraire à la vérité, c'est que la plupart de ces lettres soi-disant brûlées sont à cette heure entre mes mains.

Enfin, ainsi que je le fais savoir en toute occasion—M. Jules Huret l'imprimait encore dans le *Figaro* du 2 Mars dernier—je ne suis absolument pour rien dans la mise au jour des *Lettres à l'Etrangère*. Mon rôle s'est exclusivement donné à remettre à l'éditeur une copie de ces lettres, exécutée et collationnée par moi-même. Par conséquent, s'il existe des différences entre les autographes et le texte publié, ceci m'est absolument étranger.

Du reste, je m'étonne on ne peut plus qu'avant de mettre au jour tous ces racontars et d'y mêler mon nom, l'auteur de la traduction anglaise de ces *Lettres*, n'ait pas songé d'abord à s'adresser à moi directement. C'eût été, ce me semble, le meilleur moyen de se faire renseigner exactement, et d'obtenir la preuve ou l'authenticité absolue des textes cités dans mes ouvrages.

Je vous autorise, Monsieur le Directeur, à publier cette lettre, si cela peut vous être agréable, et je vous prie de trouver ici l'expression de mes sentiments distingués.

VICOMTE DE SPOELBERCH DE LOVENJOU.

Paris: 25 Mai, 1900.

[The "fragment" from the *Quotidienne* newspaper, to which M. de Lovenjoul refers, is Balzac's private advertisement, inserted by him in response to the request contained in Mme. de Hanska's first letter.—ED.]

New Books Received.

[These notes on some of the New Books of the week are preliminary to Reviews that may follow.]

A TREASURY OF CANADIAN VERSE.

ED. BY THEODORE H. RAND.

This book is welcome at sight. It appears to be an exhaustively representative selection of Canadian verse, "selected from the entire field of our history." Here are reflected the aspects of nature in Canada in all the seasons, the aspirations of a young country, and "Anglo-centric conceptions and aspirations, divining with poetic insight the coming good." (Dent. 4s. 6d. net.)

NATURE IN DOWNLAND.

BY W. H. HUDSON.

Mr. Hudson is one of our most popular ornithological writers, and the author of *Birds in London*. Here he is engaged with Sussex, a county for which writers of charm have done little. Leaving geology severely alone, Mr. Hudson takes us over the smooth surface of the Downs, chatting of their "animal and vegetable forms, from the point of view of the lover of nature, and, in a moderate degree, of the field naturalist." (Longmans. 10s. 6d. net.)

HYMNS OF THE GREEK CHURCH.

TRANSLATED BY
REV. JOHN BROWNLIE.

When, thirty-eight years ago, Dr. John Mason Neal published his *Hymns of the Eastern Church*, he wrote: "And while fully sensible of their imperfections, I may yet, by way of excuse rather than of boast, say, almost in Bishop Hall's words:

I first adventure: follow me who list,
And be the second Eastern Melodist."

Mr. Brownlie has accepted the challenge, and here gives us translations of some of the beautiful hymns in the Greek Church service books. A scholarly introduction is prefixed to the hymns, which number about fifty. (Oliphant. 2s.)

BYRON'S WORKS.

VOL. III.

ED. BY ERNEST HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

This volume of the definitive edition of Byron contains "The Giaour," "The Bride of Abydos," "The Corsair," "Lara," "The Siege of Corinth," "Parisina," the "Hebrew Melodies," and a number of short poems. A portrait of Byron in an Albanian costume, from a picture in the possession of Mr. Murray, forms the frontispiece. (Murray. 6s.)

In addition to the foregoing, we have received:

THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL.

Kingsbury (T. L.), *Spiritual Sacrifice and Holy Communion* (Macmillan & Bowes)
Srawley (Rev. J. H.), *The Epistles of St. Ignatius*. 2 vols. each 1/0
Bindley (Rev. T. H.), *The Epistle of the Galician Churches, Lugdunum and Vienna, &c.* (S.P.C.K.) 1/0

POETRY, CRITICISM, AND BELLES LETTRES.

Ward (May Alden), *Prophets of the Nineteenth Century*.....(Gay & Bird) 4/0
Robinson (W. Clarke), *British Poets of the Revolution Age*.....(Olley & Co.)

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. Second Series. Vol. XIV.(Parker & Co.)
Theal (George McCall), *A Little History of South Africa* (Unwin) 1/6
Sonntag (Hedwig), *The Magic Ring of Music* (Dent) net 3/6
Lindsay (Thomas M.), *Luther and the German Reformation* (Clark)
French (R. V.), *British Christianity during the Roman Occupation* (S.P.C.K.) /6

Richardson (Ralph), Courts & Co., Bankers(Stock) 5/8
 Smeaton (Oliphant), Thomas Guthrie(Oliphant) 1/8
 Bryce (George), The Remarkable History of the Hudson's Bay Company
 (Sampson Low)(T. & T. Clark) 3/0
 Snell (F. J.), Wesley and Methodism(Blackwood) 21/0
 Farrer (Sir Joseph), Recollections of My Life(Richards) 10/6
 Robertson (John M.), An Introduction to English Politics

SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY.

Mackenzie (M.), Social and Political Dynamics(Williams & Norgate) 10/6

MISCELLANEOUS.

Pike (Oliver G.), In Bird-Land with Field-Glass and Camera(Unwin) 1/0

NEW EDITIONS.

Herford (C. H.), Eversley Shakespeare in Separate Plays: Twelfth Night,
 Othelloeach 1/0 or 2/0
 Macaulay (Lord), Essays(Ward, Lock) 2/0

* * New Novels are acknowledged elsewhere.

Our Weekly Competition.

Result of No. 36 (New Series).

LAST week we offered a prize of One Guinea for the best quatrain on a writer, in the nature of a personal tribute. The response has been good. We have decided that the prize is due to Miss L. C. Jack, 5, Quadrant, North Berwick, for the following tribute to

JOHN RUSKIN.

Greener is the green, and bluer is the blue,
 Truer seems the Good, and the Beautiful more true,
 Lovelier far is love, and life a second birth,
 Since thou, O little child of God, wast master of my worth.

The two next best quatrains are these by Miss Gertrude Newstead, Clifton, and Miss Elizabeth F. Stevenson, Newcastle-on-Tyne:

BROWNING.

Greatheart among us pilgrims, thou dost move
 "The baffled to fight better," urge the strong
 To worthier effort; brave faith, boundless love
 For man, in God, the burden of thy song.

[G. N.]

HORACE.

Moulder of metres and of words made fit
 For mellow thoughts whose fame the ages keep,
 Beneath thy Roman calm, thy balanced wit,
 Our modern spirit stirs, and cannot sleep.

[E. F. S.]

Other answers are:

WORDSWORTH.

Master, the world is too much with us still,
 The din, the tumult, and the jostling rude!
 We need with thee to climb the morning hill,
 And breathe thy spirit's vaster amplitude.

[T. B. D., Bridgwater.]

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Of art and life the master, deep within
 My heart, I keep thy axiom, sweet and clear;
 Not vainly to strive in leading men from sin,
 But doing all for happiness while here

[H. P. B., Glasgow.]

MILTON.

Milton, the task was yours to "justify
 The ways of God to men": you deftly trod
 The journey whose accomplishment were nigh
 To justify the ways of men to God.

[C. E. H., Richmond.]

S. AUGUSTINE.

Goethe's clear brain, plus Gordon's scorn of pelf,
 O, son of Monica, were thy double dower:
 In heavenward life, and daily death to self,
 Aid me to share the secret of thy power!

[R. F. McC., Whitby.]

SHAKESPEARE.

What gladsome flutterings from baser earth
 My soul hath lifted, after thine to look;
 What tears of pity and what draughts of mirth
 My heart hath drawn, O Shakespeare, from thy book!

[S. W., Cathcart.]

JOHN DAVIDSON.

Spirit, that builds Love's walls and architrave,
 Of colours, music, self the corner stone:
 Honour to hearts as manly brave,
 As woman-sweet as is thine own!

[H. R. S., Newcastle-on-Tyne.]

SHAKESPEARE.

In Homer's, Dante's, Milton's verse the measured roll
 Keeps equal state monotonous: the poet's soul
 Is, Wordsworth, thine; the sound we yield, oh, Keats, to thee:
 Thou, Shakespeare, bear'st all palms, and each immortally.

[T. C., Buxted.]

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

I will build a monument unto her glory,
 A monument of gentle deeds and love;
 I will raise it up from story unto story,
 In gratitude to her who taught us love.

[S. M., Addiscombe.]

TENNYSON.

When life's long burden hangeth heavily,
 I muse that thou hast lived, beloved guide;
 And when I meet my death, so let me be
 Content to die, Master, for thou hast died.

[E. M., West Smithfield.]

EMERSON.

"The soul can be trusted to the end."
 "Trust thy soul! pure, God-filled, true!"
 The dulled word rang out minted new;
 And two worlds saw a fading truth
 Restored by thee to glowing youth.

[C. M. D., London.]

TO SHAKESPEARE, ENSPHERED.

Might but one ray of that "particular star"
 Which is thy crown and high prerogative,
 Pierce to the herd uncrowned who gaze afar,
 My soul with thine should laugh, and love, and live.

[M. A. W., London.]

THE BURGESS OF STRATFORD.

One of the people; at the people's call
 To act, to vamp, to travel, to procure;
 Separate and vast; in some sort through it all
 By being of the people to endure.

[C. S. O., London]

WORDSWORTH.

To read the meaning 'neath the outward show,
 Thy high illumined message well hath taught,
 But, better far, through thee we come to know
 The deep abiding happiness of thought.

[S. C.]

VIRGIL.

Master, what muse thy verse with magic dowers,
 The rich, sad tone that to our memory clings?
 Thy face was set to applaud the conquering hours,
 But in thy voice were tears for human things.

[J. H. F., Clifton.]

JOHN RUSKIN.

The golden bowl is broken! mute Despair
 Moans o'er the glittering dust in vain!
 The silver cords are loosened! Shall frail Air
 Retouch them into life again?

[W. M. R., Manchester.]

OMAR KHAYYAM.

O far above the clanging bells of strife
 And throb of pulses beating out their day,
 Some ceaseless echo vibrates thro' my life
 Omar, since first I hearkened to thy lay!

[Z. McC., Whitby]

Competition No. 37 (New Series).

In this week's competition the following witty stanza was sent in by Mrs. F. L. Anderson, of Ealing:

JANE AUSTEN.

Dear Maiden Aunt of Letters, faultless Jane,
 Pattern precise, prim critic of our sex,
 What would you say—could you come back again—
 Of Zaza, Nana, and the Gay Lord Quex?

Obviously this had no chance of the prize, for it is an epigram, not a eulogy. But it may serve as a model for another competition. We offer a prize of One Guinea for the best epigrammatic verse of four lines connecting an old author with the present day.

RULES.

Answers, addressed "Literary Competition, THE ACADEMY, 43, Chancery-lane, W.C.," must reach us not later than the first post of Tuesday, June 5. Each answer must be accompanied by the coupon to be found in the third column of p. 476, or it cannot enter into competition. Competitors sending more than one attempt at solution must accompany each attempt with a separate coupon; otherwise the first only will be considered. We cannot consider anonymous answers.

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